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PART II.

BURNSIANA:

A COLLECTION OF LITERARY ODDS AND ENDS

RELATING TO

ROBERT BURNS.

COMPILED BY

JOHN D. ROSS,

AUTHOR OF "SCOTTISH POETS IN AMERICA,"

AND EDITOR OF "CELEBRATED SONGS OF SCOTLAND," "ROUND BURNS' GRAVE," ETC.



PAISLEY: ALEXANDER GARDNER,
Publisher to Her Majesty the Queen.

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PAISLEY; AND 26 PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON.

1893.

BURNS ON BURNS.

—0—

“And wear thou this,” she solemn said,
And bound the Holly round my head;
The polished leaves, and berries red
Did rustling play,
And, like a passing thought she fled
In light away.

The gossip keekit in his loof,
Quo’ she, wha lives will see the proof
This waly boy will be nae coof,
I think we’ll ca’ him Robin.

He’ll hae misfortunes great an’ sma’,
But aye a heart abune them a’,
He’ll be a credit tae us a’,
We’ll a’ be prood o’ Robin.

BURNS—“A man who had little art in making money, and still less in keeping it; but was however, a man of some sense, a great deal of honesty, and unbounded good-will to every creature, rational and irrational.”

Is there a whim inspired fool
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate to seek, owre prood to snool?
Let him draw near;
And o’er this grassy heap sing dool,
And drop a tear.

Is there a man whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself, life’s mad career
Wild as the wave?
Here pause—and, through the starting tear,
Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below,
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low
And stained his name.

Reader, attend, whether thy soul
Soars fancy’s flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole
In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious self-control
Is wisdom’s root.



THIS SECOND VOLUME OF "BURNSIANA" IS

DEDICATED TO

Charles Calverley, Esq.,

Of New York,

THE SCULPTOR OF THE BURNS MONUMENT AT ALBANY, N.Y.,

OF THE BUST OF THE POET IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, NEW YORK,

AND WHO IN HIS OWN SPHERE HAS DONE MUCH TO HONOUR IN AMERICA

THE MEMORY OF

SCOTIA'S DARLING POET.

NOTE TO VOLUME II.

THE compiler has been much gratified at the reception accorded to the first volume of this series. In no instance has it been unfavourably criticised, nor has the general usefulness or ultimate importance of the project been questioned. It is of course designed to make each volume superior to the one which preceded it, and a very cordial invitation is again extended to the lovers of Burns throughout the world, to assist with contributions, etc., in furtherance of this end. These contributions need not necessarily be original. Cuttings and extracts from Burns Scrap books (and there are thousands of such books in existence to-day), old addresses, reminiscences, etc., etc., will be welcomed and made use of, provided that they are found to possess sufficient interest in connection with the subject. Thanks are due and are herewith sincerely tendered to the gentlemen who have contributed articles for the work. Especially do I thank the Rev. Arthur John Lockhart, ("Pastor Felix") of Cherryfield, Maine, U.S.A., Author of the "Masque of Minstrels," and various other beautiful and talented poems. This gentleman—who by the way is a great Burns enthusiast—has truly been unsparing in his efforts to make the present volume a successful one from a literary standpoint; and the contributions both original and selected, which he has furnished for its pages, must have consumed many of his leisure hours, but they attest the sincerity of his wishes that the undertaking may become a valuable and popular publication.

JOHN D. ROSS.

96 GEORGIA AVE,
BROOKLYN, N.Y., U.S.A.

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BURNSIANA.

I.—ORATION ON BURNS.

BY THE REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Delivered before the Burns Club of New York at the Centennial Birth-day of the Poet, Tuesday Jan. 25, 1859.

I COME upon your invitation, gentlemen of the Burns Club, friends and fellow-citizens, to celebrate with one half of the civilized world, and with the whole world of letters, the birth of a farmer's boy, who became a ploughman, a flax-dresser, an exciseman and gauger, and who was reputed also to have become a poet. One hundred years ago, January 25th, 1759, Agnes Brown Burness gave to the world her son, Robert Burns. The father and mother were Scotch. The son only took Scotland on his way into the whole world. While we allow Scotchman suitable national pride in their chief poet, we cannot allow the world to be robbed of their right and interest in Burns. And yet there never was born to that land, so fertile in men, a truer Scotchman; and it is the peculiar admiration and glory of the man, that in spite of obscurity, bred to all the local influences, Scotch in bone, in muscle, in culture, and in dialect, he rose higher than the special and national, and achieved his glory in those elements which unite mankind, and make all nations of one blood. While men of science are groping about the signs of eternal man, and debating the origin and unity of races, a poet strikes the fundamental chords, and all races, peoples, and tongues hear, understand, and agree; so that the poet is, after all, the true ethnologist. The human heart is his harp, and he who knows how to touch that with skill, belongs to no country, can be shut in by no language, nor sequestered by any age. He belongs to the world and to the race.

The father of Burns, William Burness—the poet contracted the name when he published his first volume—was a genuine man in his way. He had a head, and a heart, and a pair of hands, all of which were kept exceedingly busy in prolonging a desperate fight for life and comfort. He was a man of stern probity, of the deepest religious convictions, and of an indomitable will. He expected much of all his family, but was sterner with himself than with any other. His only amusement was speculative theology, but that did not injure his morals, for he was a man of scrupulous integrity to the last, clean to the very fountain of honour; yet was irascible, and when unduly thwarted, violent in temper. He held up his head like a brave swimmer in a rough sea, until the waves fairly beat him down. William Burness never prospered. His son says of him: "Stubborn, ungainly integrity, and headlong, ungovernable irascibility, are disqualifying circumstances in the path of fortune." It is not the rigour of integrity which stands in any man's way. It is the indiscriminate stiffening of everything by the rigour of pride saturated with conscience; for God has built the human form to combine the utmost stiffness with the utmost liveness. There are bones for stiffness, and there are joints for limberness. So with the character. It is to be built upon the sternest elements of truth and justice, but somewhere there must be liveness and pliability. If there are no joints in the character, no supple motion, and if the tastes, opinions and prejudices, likes

and dislikes, are all solidified into a multiple conscience, no man can get along in life. It was a little too much of this ossification which made William Burness too stiff to fight well. Some parents seem to be the mere antecedents of their children. As ships sometimes are built far up the stream where timber abounds and only float down and out of the estuary, so it would seem of some men that they owe their natures to their grandparents or some body far up the stream of generations. Burns's father possessed very much the same character as his son. The same moral honesty, the same pride, the same violence of feeling, the same penetration of man, the same breadth of understanding, the same impatience of restraint from without, the same unfitness for thriving in worldly matters, the same longing for wealth, for its independence, and contempt for the means of getting wealth, belonged to the father and the more illustrious son. Only, besides the father, Robert Burns carried in him a great deal of the mother; and if he had carried more he would have been better, for the father is the bush and the mother is the blossom, and the fruit germ is always in or under the blossom. Agnes Brown was a woman of humble birth, that is, she was born as every body else is born. It will not do to say "king's babe and beggar's brat." Being born is a very humble business at any rate, and there is very little difference in crying, in sleeping, in eating, for in the cradled unconsciousness of babes the world over, there is very much of a sameness. It is thought by some that men have lived in a world before this and that they are set out a second time here—though it would be difficult to imagine in many cases what they grew in, if this was the second growth, yet Agnes Brown was an exception: she brought along with her from that dim source of human life, wherever or whatever it was, the seed of many rare and precious faculties. Central and strong was her heart. It had that deep nature which religion always gives. It is faith in the invisible and in the infinite that rolls out the sea into an unhedged ocean and makes the thought long and deep. Any nature without the depth of moral feeling is but a river pilot steering a light craft near the river banks, and

thumping along at every turn upon the sand or mud. As the stream of her life ran far above the bottom, it did not carry many ripples upon its surface. She was calm, gentle, and of a heavenly temper. She was a good house-keeper, which is a very brave and noble thing in woman, and a thing often requiring more mind and tact than to govern a nation, as nations are governed. But while she wrought and arranged, she chatted and sung, for Burns's mother was the mother of Burns's poetry. Her songs and ballads were in great store and of a moral aim. The song which she loved most to sing and Burns most loved to hear, was "The Life and Age of Man," comparing the periods of human life to the months of the year; and Burns says of his grand-uncle that during many years of his blindness he had no greater enjoyment than that of crying, while his mother sang that ballad to him. Ah, how many sweet sounds there are in this world, how many sounds of air and water, how many songs of birds and sounds of musical instruments; but when all is said, neither has man invented any musical instrument, nor has nature in all her choir and orchestra any thing which for sweetness is like a mother's voice singing through the house, while she labours—songs, hymns, and ballads—the children sleep, dream of angels, and awake and say "Mother!" With such a father and such a mother, Burns could not help himself. Of course he must be an Apollo's arrow with such a mother for a bow, and with such a father for a string; and the bow abides in its strength, and the string is uncut, and the arrow still flies, and sounds in flying. The father of Burns had just built, and poorly built, a clay cottage on the banks of the Doon, county of Ayr, and scarcely had the poet learned to live, that is, to cry, before a rude storm beat down the tenement. That storm never spent itself, but blew after him all his life long. He was wont, in the days of his trouble, with gloomy playfulness, to attribute the violence of his passions to the tempest which ushered himself into the world; and these passions certainly succeeded in blowing down the clay-built tenement in which he himself dwelt. As a child we have little record of him except his own reminiscences in his various letters. He was not precocious.

His earlier years seem to have been purely receptive. He was unconsciously receiving his education. It was a good education. There was no Latin nor Greek in it: but as he did not intend to sing in those tongues, there was no special reason in his case for learning them. They were dead languages; he was a living man—a living singer. His father and mother taught him morals and religion. An old servant, Jenny Wilson, took charge of his imagination, fired and fed it by such a collection of tales and songs concerning devils, fairies, brownies, spunkies, warlocks, wraiths, apparitions, cantrips, giants, enchanted towers, dragons, and other trumpery, as I suppose no poet had ever received before or since. But Burns's imagination was not superstitious, notwithstanding such a beginning; it was eminently simple, natural, and transparent; so that these tales only stimulated but did not subdue, nor even educate his imagination. They fell upon his young fancy as coarse fertilizers upon the farmer's field, which enter in the earth black and noisome, but re-appear as flowers, seeds, and fruit. Nature was also at work in his education. I mean the physical world without him held up to him clouds or cloudless heavens, morning and evening, rivers, thickets, rocks and ravines, birds, flowers, and harvest-fields, and whatever else comes into the ear-gate or the eye-gate. Some natures gain nothing from this great school-master, Nature. They are like dogs in Raphael's studio, or in Michael Angelo's house; they get meat there, but never learn to paint or carve. But other men are sensitive to all that Nature does, as if God stood visibly before them and showed his hand while drawing forms and laying on the colours; and Burns was one of these.

But great pains was taken with young Burns to give him all the advantage of the school learning that the times, the neighbourhood, and his parents' scanty means could supply. A Scotch farmer's house is itself no mean school. There is learned at least a deal of local history and legendary lore which books are not apt to contain. There the child is taught to ponder and dispute in speculative theology—a practice which in education is of wonderful power. Whatever we may think of the truth or wisdom of the elements of

speculative theology, no man can be from his childhood taught to go forth in these wide-reaching views of divine government and human destiny, without having a deep place in his nature touched; and no man can mount to the great speculations of free will and divine decrees, and do battle with them without gaining both dialectic skill and some arousing of the imagination. But though Burns declined from the rigid faith of the kirk, and leaned towards new lights, yet he had breathed an atmosphere which affected his mind to the end. In succession, he went to school to Mr. Campbell—(I mention the names of these men, who are great, because of their connection with him)—and afterwards to Mr. Murdoch in the town of Ayr. At nineteen he spent a short time at school at Kirkoswald, where he learned mensuration, engineering, and what not. In the meantime Burns had read Bunyan, who if once read will be remembered forever. He says—“The idea I formed of modern manners and literature and criticism, I got from the *Spectator*. These with Pope's works, which could add nothing to Burns's only as an aid in smoothing his style, some plays in Shakspeare, Dickson on Agriculture, Locke on the Understanding, (and a better one was never put on,) —Stackhouse's History of the Bible, Boyle's Lectures, Allan Ramsay's works, Taylor's Scriptural History of Original Sin, a Select Collection of English Songs and Harvey's Meditations, formed the whole of my readings.” These books were well enough, for in sooth neither schoolmaster nor books made Robert Burns. He did not derive his tempestuous nature from books. His tender love, his sympathy, his personal relationship to whatever in nature was beautiful, his penetration of human life, his mournful melancholy, his love of man, of liberty, of power, and grandeur,—the roots of Burns's works, you shall not find in any of these books. They are good books. It is the reader who makes a good book. They were great books when Burns read them; but you shall not find his teachers there. It was the created and unwritten book of God that taught Robert Burns. Let us look at him at fourteen. He was a coarse, awkward, graceless, lubberly boy; of a silent way, not given to

mirth, not quick, and utterly unlike a poet. But he knew how to work. As early as fourteen he became skilful as a ploughman, and at fifteen he was the head workman on his father's farm. Let it be said here that Burns was never a lazy, shiftless man, who took to poetry as a fair excuse for neglecting hard work. No man ever worked more patiently or uncomplainingly than did he; and though for years he fought desperately against discouragement on his father's farm, when he afterwards became a farmer for himself, he never shrank from toil—the rudest, coarsest, and most uncongenial to his poetic temperament.

But we must not anticipate. Burns is now twenty; but his hand is on the harp. His life is fairly begun—the sad life of a glorious man full of noble impulses stumbling in a rough way, full of the most congenial and tender affections, grasping mankind by the heart, and aiming in all his essential works to crown his human life with goodness. But before we venture upon that career of mingled good and ill, we must stop and ask what Burns was—for there are some who press upon him vehemently with the sins of his life, and some who as rashly defend them at the expense of good morals.

That he violated his own moral sense, his own solemn and bitter words do show. Difficult indeed is it to equal the awful solemnity of Burns's bitter words. Hew as his Rhadamanthus. He carried conviviality to excess, violated his principles of virtue, and grafted license upon love. Burns is not helped when we deny these mournful facts of his sad life, or when we palliate them to a degree which shall make them less guilty in a poet than in every man. Let them stand if they are facts. We must recognize them. In drawing his character, while we give it all the lights, we must not shrink from the fidelity of the shadows also. But although immoralities are never to be excused by what a man is not, yet what a man is will determine the severity and leniency of our condemnation. How a ship behaves upon the sea, depends not alone upon the skill of those who manage her, but also upon the way in which it was built. How was Burns built? Burns was endowed with a masculine understanding,

clear and penetrating, that saw things by their whole, intuitively, and not in detail. His mind was logical in thought, not in things. He was wiser as a thinker than an actor, for the part of the mind, which is the ground of the instinct which gives management, tact, and thrift in the common things of life, was not eminent in him. He inherited a pride, which wrought in him a most intense sense of personality, which gave him a very high ideal of manliness, which inspired an undying longing for a well-earned glory, which made him suspicious of all above him, and a patron and protection of all below him—a pride which, acting in one way, sustained him under a load of ill-success, and which, turning inward, ate his heart out, because he could not rise. I know not from which parent he took his heart; from both of them, I think. He was generous, like his father, who was more kind to others than to himself. He had the depth and tenderness of his mother's heart, but not her calmness and evenness. Her heart lay tranquil, like one of the sweet lakes of Scotland. His beat as the ocean beats and surges on the western shores of Scotland. It has been the fashion to speak of Burns as having a light fancy, easily kindled by the glance of beauty, and as easily extinguished. Nothing can be more untrue. No heart was ever truer or more enduring in its affections. He never loved to cast off; but each love was but another link, not always golden, of that long chain of which his heart was the immovable staple. He loved men, he loved animals, and whatever grew, if it only grew in Scotland. His loving nature was wonderful. No man can form any estimate of either the good or bad that was in him, who does not study Burns's heart, whose tides were as deep as the ocean's, and sometimes as tempestuous. That he was more susceptible to women than men is not strange. The same thing has happened before. And though he best loved women, women was not the only subject of his affection. In his better moods, universal being circled into his affections. His nature overspread universal human life, as the great arch overspreads the world with benign brightness by day, and drops down upon it mute dews by night. And to this we must add that peculiar kind

of emotion which you may call fancy, imagination, of poetic vision—that divine element of the soul which teaches it to see the soul of things, and not their material bodies, which clothes everything it looks upon with beauty and grace, which works with sounds, forms, and movements, and evolves a subtle grace in them all. The soul that has this divine element is as a divine wardrobe; the eye, ear and mind are almoners, going forth and clothing all things with a radiant apparel.

Besides these faculties, there were two other elements which largely influenced Burns's life and determined his character. The first is his hereditary taint of melancholy. The other was his temperament. From his earliest life, and in all his poems, we see that dark and desponding tone which so wonderfully contrasts with other salient traits of his character. At times it seems as if the great world of despondency swung round between him and the sun, and he lay in fearful eclipse, hopeless, gloomy, wretched, and tormented. Had his life been successful, it may be believed that with vigorous health, and with praise which would gratify his pride, and with full opportunity to put forth his undeveloped powers, he would have risen above his malady. But strong in youth, it grew stronger when evil habits broke his constitution, and poverty was pinching him with want more and more. And his own moral nature adding remorse to despondency, this natural hypochondria became almost a fatal malady. Nor is it less important that we should consider his temperament, for on that depends much of the credit which some men have both for prudence and self-control, and the reverse. We believe that later physiologists agree in this, that in the human system there is a portion of the nervous matter, whose function is to produce general sensibility without regard to the special faculties of the mind. Thus, a sound of music falling upon two ears, fills one with the most thrilling sensibility, while the other receives it calmly; not that the musical faculty is more acute in one than the other, but that the whole nervous system receives more readily. This fact becomes more apparent in morbid states of health. The sounds which are of no consequence at other times fill the whole mind

with expressive emotion; so that in estimating the power of feeling in any man, we must look to the development and combination of the separate faculties of mind in their normal creative power, and then next to the general sensibility of the whole nervous system, under the influence of which the special faculties are attuned. Some men with strong minds and hearts have a low temperament and are deficient in general sensibility. Their feelings are gradually worked up; they have an equable nature; they heat as iron heats. Some men heat as powder heats; that is, a touch and explosion. It is not a trouble to some men to maintain an equable, temperate medium; they are by nature cool, unimpassioned, and unexcitable. The sins of such men are usually the sins that collect upon the not-doing side of life, moth, mildew, mould, mistletoe, rust. But such men are unfit judges for those who have imperious sensibilities, men who hear thunder as if it were the hand of a friend knocking at the door are fit to judge of men in whose ear the same hand knocking at the door sounds like thunder. Robert Burns was eminently a man who had this excessive sensibility. He overflowed with strength of feeling. His capacity for generating sensibility was prodigious. His one nature carried enough for twenty common men of mere force of feeling. He never trickled drop by drop prudentially, but he gushed. He never ran a slender thread of silver water; he came down, booming, all broad, like one of his own streams, when a shower has touched and broken upon the mountain; and there never was any proportion between the cause and the effect: a mouse, a flower, a hare, had him in their power whatever time his heart was opened. The daisy which went under when he ploughed was not so much subjected to the iron ploughshare as he was to the touch of the daisy's modest look. All the powers of his nature were subjected to this same sudden overflow. He thought as dragoons charge. He felt life as prairies feel autumnal fires, with their leaping flames outrunning the fleetest deer and all before them, and leaving, alas, too often ashes and smoke behind them. He suffered as if fiends possessed him, and enjoyed as if angels carried

him in their bosom. There he stands, like the mountains of his own land—often capped with storms, oftener shrouded with mists, and scarred with ravines; often thundering with the sound of rushing waters which dashed down the valley, tearing up roads and sweeping away bridges. But there, also, birds brooded and sung; sweet flowers found foot-room; pure lakes and rock-bound brooks look silently up to God; the spicebush, and vines purple with berries, and grass, and moaning pines and wind-waved larches—these all held fellowship—the stern and the gentle, the rugged and the beautiful, the pure and the turbid, the massive, and the sweetest, tenderest littleness of beauty! Strange fellowship of opposition in the one man! The world has never seen his like!

Now, our problem is—how was this very sensitive creature—proud, loving, ambitious, yearning, ringing with every imagination, with a head better for thought than for things, with a heart that everybody could kindle and nobody put out—how was he to make his way upwards in life, from poverty and wretchedness into large success? It is not the question, how shall a man carry a small cup half full without spilling, but how shall a man carry a great cup brimful, over a rough road, and in a stormy night, without spilling? It is not, how well a machine can raise just steam enough to get along; but how an engine shall get along that makes more steam than it can overwork or cast off, trembling with inward intensity as it runs with open throttle and open furnace doors, singing at every seam and hissing at every rivet? The question we propound to you, is not what is right, what is duty—all are agreed as to that—but what shall this Robert Burns do? With that nature of his, compounded of such astonishing opposites—with the profoundest melancholy, and a sociability varying from a smile to roaring revelry—with an overflowing heart of kindness and love, and a pride as high and stern as the lordliest monarch on his throne—with an understanding so clear and practical that no shams or cant could for a moment deceive or mystify it—with an imagination so strong and transparent that it gave another nature than its own to every thing, and almost every person—with an

honour and conscience so high that he would sooner have died than spoken a falsehood or broken a plighted word; and with such a fancy, that all things were magnified and distorted—his friends were angels and his enemies devils; homely faces, handsome; simple and common natures, divine; good men, hideous; and upright men, wicked; with such a keen relish for life, that he thrilled all his companions with merriment, as a drum wakes a camp, and yet despising the world, and walking above men, as shadows—yearning for immortality! It is one of the strangest, the richest, and most remarkable of human histories the world has ever recorded.

Gilbert, the eldest brother, the plain honest brother; Robert, the wonderfully compounded man, were at school together. Robert was the dunce, Gilbert was the merry and witty one; Robert was as little known to himself as to others. One thing was plain; he was no sentimental laggard. His father had a hard farm and a desperate strife for a livelihood. Robert made at fortune with a resolution, industry and patience which would have conquered, if it could have been done by fine furrows and the handsome cast of the hand in sowing seed. At the age of thirteen, he assisted in all the labours of the farm. At fourteen, he feared no competitor with scythe, sickle or plough. At fifteen, he was the principal labourer on the farm; and at this age he would appear to have had the very stuff, out of which to have made a plodding yeoman. He speaks of his sufferings, and of his doom as the tramp and moil of a galley-slave. In this way, and all this time, he was seizing everything in his way, and pushing in every direction, studying all the nicer shades of the language, a critic as he styles himself, in verbs and substantives. In his labours he carried with him a book of national songs. He pored over these Scotch ballads, every word of which was to him like the voice of a spirit, calling him by name. Next Burns goes to school at Kirkoswald to learn surveying. He is nineteen; he is unfolding and with very little to help him, and with no one to understand him. He is full of all manner of strange things of a most contrary description, but all alike in being strong

and impetuous. Here his social nature unfolds, and his intuitive sense of character displays itself. He learns to read men, and a yet more dangerous literature, for his studies were all stopped short by falling in love with a damsel living next door. He went out to take an observation of the sun, saw her, and stopped. He goes home, hungering for letters and improving his style by every diligence, and opening correspondence with every man who could write a creditable letter. His soul was struggling and it had no helper. Again, he is at home upon his father's farm, at Lochlea. He is twenty years of age, and reading Mackenzie and Sterne, both sentimentalists; one poor and feeble, and the other strong and evil. That great nature, all alive, had no legitimate channel yet. No man said to him, "God sent you, Burns, into life to be a poet;" but every man said to him, "Burns, you are born to be a farmer." Burns thought so too. He tried to be one. All his understanding, conscience and filial piety were forcing him into a kind of life, which was both uncongenial and unnatural. Is it surprising that nature, denied in her highest endowments, should re-act somewhere, and that Burns, who in his social life possessed a power of conversation which gave him superiority to all about him, should sometimes overflow with revelry?

But affairs were dark at Lochlea. The farm will do better with flax, and Robert goes to Irvine to learn flax dressing, while his father and Gilbert remain at home to raise the crop. He is twenty-two years of age, with a soul fully awake, and all his powers beating in him for some natural exercise; his poetry, his love, his rugged patriotism, his philosophic meditations, and his rare and exquisite sensibility for natural beauty—are all set down to break flax and hatchel it. This is good work for a poet. Why, yes, poets, artists, and geniuses can do anything, if they only know that they are artists, poets, and geniuses; and that a homely tool is the mere means by which they are to attain to better things. But if they do not know their mission, if they are coming and going with all the moods of contraband sensibility, ignorant of their mission, and supposing that life's business is flax dressing, and that they are wasting their life-power in

that engrossing and delightful business; is it strange that there should be such rebellion?

This many-sided but all insided man, had not yet concentrated himself on anything that was appropriate to him. The forces he was striving to use were secondary, but those which were his real and predestined elements were only allowed to play alternatively. So he was inverting his life on the very threshold, and aiming at the wrong thing conscientiously, and only by stealth employing the glorious elements for whose very sake he had been born into the world. What a strange position! At one time he appears as a disputant at Calvinistic theology—a good occupation—at another time rollicking with high fellows at a smuggling life, more full of force and brave daring than of moral honesty. At another he is in love and jilted; then lamenting his fate; then, yet worse, he is obliged to endure public censure for the violation of rectitude, which no man despised more than he. Next he is writing to his father, and his very sincerity in contrast with his vain ways, makes it seem the more extraordinary. He says:

"The weakness of my nervous system has so debilitated my mind, that I dare neither review the past events or look into futurity, for the least anxiety or perturbation produces the most unhappy effects upon my whole frame; and sometimes, when for an hour or two my spirits are enlightened and I glimmer into futurity, I am quite transported at the thought that ere long, perhaps very soon, I shall bid eternal adieu to all the pains, uneasiness, and disquietudes of this weary life; for, I assure you, I am heartily tired of it. But if I do not deceive myself, I could contentedly and gladly resign it."

This letter was dated the 23rd of December. Three days afterward his mind was won back so that he consented to join in a carouse to welcome in the New Year; and as the merriment of that occasion ran high, a spark caught the flax, and the work of six months was burned in as many minutes.

The next two years, his twenty-third and twenty-fourth, his outward life was dull, his real life, sociality—good and bad. His poetry was good in the main; but it was yet poetry as a relaxation—as a resource from

unprofitable life. He says—"My passions once lighted raged up like so many devils until they got vent in rhyme. Then the conning over my verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet."

With all that flow of soul in him; with his rebounding from the highest conviviality to the lowest despondency; with his yearnings and longings for, he knew not what; with a sensibility that every object caused to tremble; with an ambition underneath them all, which tossed and rocked him as the ocean swells and rocks the boats and ships in the bay,—he was yet trying to make himself think that he was to be a farmer. He bitterly felt this, what two years afterwards he plainly expresses "Oh! for a little of the cart-horse part of human nature!"

Here was one of the most wonderful men ever born, who, though not humble in the estimate of himself, never dreamed of his real place; and, in his most noble audacity, never asserted for himself a tithe of what the world now eagerly heaps upon him. Here was this brave fellow, with his heart hot and his head inspired with all manner of fancies, tender and sublime, who was endeavouring in the most patient and conscientious way possible, not to be what he was made for, and to be what he was not fitted for.

James Gray, who taught the High School at Dumfries, says of Burns—"In our solitary walks on summer morning, the simplest flowret by the way-side, every seat of rural simplicity and happiness, every creature that seemed to drink of the joy of the season, awakened the sympathy of his heart which flowed in spontaneous music from his lips; and every new opening beauty, or the magnificence of the scene before him, called forth the poetry of his soul."

It was not his fault that God made him a poet. It was not his fault that his heart was a heart upon which nature played. It was not his fault that he did not know where his strength lay. At the age of twenty-five his father died, and his brother Gilbert, himself, and his mother had taken a farm. Now he means to settle this vexed question. Now he means to be a farmer in earnest; to thrive and do well. "I had entered upon this farm," he says, "with a full resolution—Come,

go to! I will be wise. I read farming books, I attended markets, I calculated crops, and, in short, in spite of the devil and the world and the flesh, I believe I should have been a wise man, but the first year, from unfortunately buying bad seed, the second from a late harvest, we lost half our crops."

No, not yet. Burns could not be a farmer first, then a poet. He would never thrive until his real genius had a full opportunity of expression. When once he had poured his life forth in its true channels, and had felt that at length he had touched the aim of his being, then he might have become secondarily a good farmer; but not now. And thus, while he bought poor seed for farming, he was sowing good seed for poetry. For besides his better theological invective, he this year planted for immortality such poems as *Halloween*, and the *Cottar's Saturday Night*. Though he had a late harvest of his land, it was early and good in his brain.

At length, at twenty-six years of age, he ventured to write "Robert Burns, Poet;" and even then it was a title of honour, and not his real name. Even now, his being a poet is something aside from the real purpose of his life. On the 1st of August, 1786, he published the first volume of his poems, by which he realized one hundred dollars. One hundred dollars! Many an enterprising publisher would have been glad to give him a thousand—for that matter, ten thousand—dollars for one of them.

He had got into great trouble. The mother of his babes was not his wife. Persecution hung over him; his farming labours were disastrous, and he determined, as the last resort of a broken-down and discouraged man, to go to Jamaica as an overseer of a plantation. I think I see Robert Burns on a plantation, with a whip under his arm! I think I see Robert Burns following a gang of slaves, and chanting "A man's a man for a' that." Poor Burns was in a very bad way, but he was not as bad as that.

A new era dawned. By the fame of his published poems, he was summoned to Edinburgh, and for nearly a year he was courted and honoured, and fêted, in that splendid metropolis of the north, by men who then attracted universal attention, and yet became

more eminent for being the friends of Burns. His modesty, his self-possession, his wonderful conversation, before which learned and practiced talkers bowed and acknowledged that the ploughman was their master; his brilliant wit and overflowing humour; his wonderful insight into human life; his passionate earnestness and eloquence, his sweetness and good heartedness; all his social qualities show that if Burns had from the first been placed in favourable circumstances, there would have been fewer shadows to mar the brilliancy of a fair fame. It is abundantly plain that if he had found as many friends to establish him in life, as he found afterwards to build his monument, the world would not have had such a melancholy story of his sufferings and death. But so it is. This world is made for men who need no help while alive; and there are always reasons found for not helping men whom the world afterwards mourns to the end; and yet, while they mourn, their tears fall upon other men who are just as much neglected as those for whom they weep.

Burns with the profits of his book now takes a farm at Ellisland, about forty miles from his own. He married Jean Armour, whom he had long loved, and would have married before, if her father had consented. Burns now being a man of reputation, a national poet, turns from the dissipations of Edinburgh to become in earnest a farmer. The illusion is not out yet, for he says to a correspondent, "as, till within these eighteen months, I never was the wealthy master of ten guineas, my knowledge of business is to learn; skill in the sober science of life is my most serious and hearty study." This was very well, you say. Every one can but wish that being so much, it had been more, and that snug, practical sagacity had been added to his poetical temperament. A man must have two natures to be a poet and a prosperous business man. They seldom are united; yet, as it was, Burns vowed most solemnly and most foolishly two impossible things, namely, that he would forego poetry and all its temptations, and embrace industry in all its drudging particulars, and "Heaven be my helper," for it will take a strong effort to bring my mind to the routine of business. I have

discharged the army of all my former pursuits, fancies and pleasures. So, now, we shall have Robert Burns without an eye, except for profits. No more flowers are to grace his vision, no more clouds are to sail above his head, no more brooks to rush along under fringing bushes, no more heart-throbs of patriotic fervour, and no more deep and sad out-lookings upon human life, no more humorous conceptions of human folly and fashion. Robert Burns forswears all this. The mouse may find no house, the hare may die in the thicket, the birds may interpret their own musical lingo; as for Burns, he is going to lay aside poetry and attend to the crops. Thus this great soul with the whole fitness of life before it, dare not embrace it, and with the whole unfitness of his nature makes a covenant with business for life. It turned out, as one might imagine; and not a great way to New Year's day, 1789, he writes:

"I have some favourite flowers in spring, among which are the mountain daisy, the hare-bell, the foxglove, the wild brier-rose, the budding birch, and the hoary hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never hear the loud, solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer morn, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of grey plovers, in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can this be owing?"

Ah, indeed, to what? It is not to farming evidently that it is owing. And these symptoms of back-sliding from farming to poetry ended in open apostacy, for within four days after this, Burns writes in a letter to Dr. Moore: "The character and employment of a poet were formerly my pleasure, but now my pride. . . . Poesy I am determined to prosecute with all my vigour."

His doubts becoming confirmed that his farming would not be remunerative, much against his taste, and repugnant to his nature, he thought of becoming an exciseman; but he says, his wife and children reconciled him to it. Fifty pounds a year are the temptation. Fifty pounds a year! Acknowledged to be the first poet of Scotland, driven to destitution, and to taking a most dangerous

occupation for his family's sake, that he might be sure of bread! His fears that he should make poor work with the farm were soon more than fears. He writes to a friend in December, 1789: "I am writing you on a farm. . . . My poor distracted mind is torn, and so jaded, and so wrecked, so be-deviled with the attempt to make one guinea do the business of three, that I detest, abhor, and swoon at the word business." There's a man to make money!

He writes to Mr. Hill:—"I want a Shakespeare; I want likewise an English Dictionary, Johnson's, I suppose, is best. In these and all my prose commissions, the cheapest is always the best for me."

The duties of excisemen were just the kind to spoil a farmer, and we must add to spoil a man. For although it was not, as he terms it, a pleasant task, yet to be on horseback mainly, under the whole heaven dashing to and fro amidst beautiful scenery, and meeting jovial men, and being entertained by those jovial men, who would gladly fill an hour with a man of Burns's genius, overflowing gaiety, and strong common-sense, was as pleasant as it proved dangerous.

His stay at Ellisland was short. He removed to Dumfries in 1791, to be occupied solely with the excise duties. Here he dwelt five years. Let those who had a heart for morbid anatomy pursue the desponding poet in his uncongenial occupation, while rebounding from it into convivialities and pleasures which his whole moral nature condemned with boiling indignation, and which almost literally seethed him in remorse. The English tongue has no language of remorse that surpasses Burns's in some of his letters. But I have no heart of such scenes.

The last five years of his were wonderfully fruitful of exquisite poetry. It was from Dumfries he sent more than a hundred songs which will live as long as the human heart shall inspire the lips. His last letters were to friends beseeching some small levies to save him from jail and his family from starvation, and the money was refused. Yet so scrupulous was this man in respect to his expenses that when he died he owed no man a penny in the world.

At length on the 21st of July, 1796, Robert

Burns was permitted to depart out of that mortal tenement—to give to dust again that body which for thirty-seven years bore one of the most wonderful natures that time has ever known. No man has ever dreamed of making Burns a saint, and no one need dispute his moral claims. No man can write anything upon his weakness and faults and sins which will not seem pale and lifeless beside his own recorded words. There is nothing in the English language in testimony of domestic virtues more earnest, wholesome, and conscieutious than his own. There are no wailings more agonizing for the violation of purity; no suffering that unite in its expression such simple, heartfelt confession of wrong with such pleadings against an indiscriminate judgment against him; and neither moralist nor judge can ever add anything to the effectiveness of Burns's condemnation of those errors which clouded his life, eclipsed his joy, and at last ended his career. For my own part, in pursuing the necessary investigation for this task, which the partiality of his countrymen (and now my countrymen,) have imposed upon me, vibrated continually between smiles and tears, between admiration and sorrow, between wonder and pity, between reverence and condemnation. But amidst all these oppositions and conflicting opinions, steadily from the beginning Burns has grown upon my heart. I have felt at every step more and more tenderly the sorrow of one that loves, and when I have laid him in the grave it is with the grief of one who buries a brother or son. No man could keep company with him, even with the shadows of this wonderful creature, and not feel his power. His vitality is beyond all example; his fullness inexhaustible; his richness beyond all terms. Every letter, every sentence, teems—untrained, irregular and wild, yet you feel that he is master even in your criticisms, and in your judgments you find and feel that he is superior. There was more put into the making of Burns than in any man in his age. That which he has given to us of himself does by no means express or interpret the whole of what he was. A great deal of his nature is like undug gold and unwashed diamonds. His songs and poems are like gold which you find in the Californian rivers,

scattered particles, indicating how rich are the veins from which they were disintegrated. His letters are as wonderful as his poems, and his conversation is regarded as richer than either. While a half idiot was picking up, in London, every contemptible acorn that fell from the rugged branches of that gnarled old oak, Johnson, I would that some dainty Ariel could have waited upon the inspired ploughman, and stamped into record the inexhaustible flow of his wonderful and rapturous conversation. But for the most part it fell upon wasteful ears of man, unfit to know its worth. The multitude of Burns's thoughts and most brilliant expressions hang in the past as crystals and white stalactites hang in unexplored caves, wonderfully beautiful, but forever hidden in darkness.

Such is the vitality of Burns, that there is not a place where he put his foot, where there has not sprung up historical flowers; and men, eminent before, have added to their eminence if Burns took them by the hand. The spots that were hoary with historic glory were destined to receive additional attraction if Burns visited them and touched them with his pen. Such vital force and such richness of soul had he, that there is no spot on the face of the last ten years of his life that was not crowded with memorials. His foot-prints now a hundred years old, are yet warm. Artists, poets, historians, laymen of every name follow them with eager enthusiasm and with full cry. Alive, his cry of dying despair could not wring a pitiful ten pounds from indebted hands to save him from ruin. To-day, he has made the world rich. Alive, he could not earn food and raiment, nor control his livelihood; but since the dropping of the flesh he has clothed millions with garments of joy and fed them with the food of manhood and sturdy courage. His life was a failure until he died. Ever since it has been a marvellous success; and death, that overthrew him, like the wind that scatters the dry seeds from the autumn boughs and whirls them away over the land, has scattered his thoughts into all the earth, to live and grow while there is soil in the human mind to receive the seeds of genius. Had he known the future, it would have consoled his heart, so yearning for sympathy, so longing and

hankering for a true fame amidst the ignoble struggles of his battling life. That sturdy soul felt the true meaning of manhood and the superiority of manhood to the mere trappings of place and adventitious glory; and he walks crowned with praise and wreathed with loving smiles in all the habitable globe. He is the inseparable companion of the Scot wherever he goes, and where is there a nook or isle of the earth where the Scotchman does not go to make much out of a little, and make it easy? Wherever he goes Burns goes with him. He is read in the camp, in the tropical forest, by the glare of torches in the south, and the light of the aurora-borealis in the north. There is not a white hawthorn that blossoms in any spot upon the globe that has not been made dear by Burns; and Scotland in her joys and sorrows, and in her whole heart is known throughout the earth as much by the songs of Burns as by her boasted sons, noble as they are, and by her historians. Strange the power of the unfleshed spirit.

Burns shows that it is not books that teach men to wrestle with the passions of the human life, but a heart. There is this rough-clad son of earth touching the marrow of things in his cold and sequestered nook, pondering over things which saddened the heart of the great legislator, which tinged Homer's view of life, and which engaged the minds of Plato and Socrates and every thinking man to the Advent, and since then. I think the worst things of Burns were written early—his bitter invectives and raillery. As he lived to see real trouble and to struggle with the stream of life, his stream of poetry, with some sad exceptions, ran clearer. His most exquisite songs, his finest delineations of nature, his most noble strains and thoughtful appeals were the fruits of his middle and later life. But it seems a mockery almost to speak of the later periods of a life which ended before most men's lives are earnestly begun. At forty men are fully men. Burns had been dead three years, when the number of forty was counted from the day of his birth. And had it pleased Him who wielded this bright star in our firmament, to have permitted it to be advanced, until it filled out its orbit here, what might we have not inherited? Had

his life reached as far as his father's or mother's we should now be speaking of those works we have from his hands as the mere first fruits of his labours. All we now possess, peradventure, would then have seemed like his own hare-bells and daisies. To him it was given to lift up the lowly. No finer genius has ever delineated the eternal forms of nature. No poet has ever better sung the humours of his fellow man. He lifted up the superstitions of the time and gave them beauty; and gathering up the lower thoughts of man, and shedding the light of his genius upon them, has made them beautiful forever. He danced with witches in the kirkyard, and followed with them through the grim air. He hung flowers even upon the brow of Satan; Milton did the same; and I think the reverence of the one, and the veneration of the other was about alike. But all these were the mere externals of poetry. The life and power of his work was in that deep moral element which pervaded his nature and gave out such sacred grandeur, and which lifted upon the eternal future such trembling and agonising glances. The power of Burns's songs consists in their moral tone. If that were dissolved from them, they, too, would dissolve and fall in pieces. It is not wit nor humour, nor pathos, which was the centre of Burns. When you look upon a tree, it is not the wood—the root, which strikes the eye; it is the thousand branches and ten thousand leaves and buds and blossoms. And yet that sober, solid centre of wood is that which enables the tree to support so many boughs, to shake so many leaves and shed its perfume abroad. Thus it is with Burns. Some leaves fall from his boughs, worm-eaten; some of the branches may be maimed or cankered; but the great tree, the centre, the substance, stands up hearty, healthy, human, and divine.

Some have supposed that our solar system, in its vast traverses of space, strikes at times aerial streams of warmth or cold, making some years memorable over others for the degree of heat or cold which attends them; so the world seems to swing through vast cycles of ideas. The time in which Burns lived was eminent for the outburst, all over the civilized world, of the spirit of Liberty. This divine spirit came forth as did Lazarus

from the sepulchre, bound hand and foot, and in the habiliments of the grave. Liberty in politics ran wantonly into license, and liberty in religion went into blind infidelity. Yet the spirit of liberty pervaded the world; and no man in all that period was a more faithful apostle of liberty than Burns. It did not develop itself in political theories or philosophical speculation. It did not touch the external forms of society at all; it went to the root of all things—the ineradicable worth of man as a child of God—a frail experimental creature of time, a lingering, wistful, expectant of a better state. The dignity and rights of the individual inspired Burns, and burns like an unquenchable fire upon the altar of his soul. He had no enmity to kings—but always first and last in his earliest poetry as well as in the latest, he bore witness with all the fidelity of an apostle and power of the poet to the fundamental doctrine that essential Manhood is the only greatness, and that nothing can exalt a man but himself, and nothing degrade him but himself. Through his whole life, this life for man was eminently not for him who had wealth, learning, influence, position, and power, but for man in his simple nature, as given by God. No tenderer heart ever cheered the sorrowful and the needy. No poet ever poured upon the heart more balm or fragrance than he. No name has ever made manhood more resonant in virtues, or more noble, invested man with honesty, reliance, patience, contentment, and self-respect, than Burns. His poems are a torch that never goes out, to all who are in dark places; and no man harassed by trouble, distracted by temptation, overcome by passion, and plunged in remorse, but will find language for his woes in the poetry of Burns. He himself has felt the sins and ills of the flesh, and no man, among the school of poets, ever was so true to his kind, rejoicing with those that rejoice, and weeping with those that weep; and the nation which read Burns in the nursery could never have tyrants in the Parliament House. The men who drink at Burns's spring will be too sturdy for oppression, too courageous for power to tamper with, and with too much self-respect for blandishment and bribes. Burns had pre-

eminently this love for man in all his moods, weakness, sorrows, joys, hopes, and fears for life, and for eternal life. He is universal in his sympathy. He loves the very shoe-latches of the poor Scotch peasant. He loves the very daisy his shoe trod upon. Terrible often with rage that sounds as thunder in the mountains, yet it is love both personal and general that marks the poems of Burns, and that gives them their wondrous vitality, and will never let them die so long as a soul yearns, or hearts desire to be tenderly cheered.

Finally, to-night let us give to the memory of Burns something of that food of love and

praise which his own soul hungered for, his life long, and never had. If he has faults, let us, like them of old, walking backward with reverence and affection, cast a mantle upon them. If every man within these twenty-four hours the world around who shall speak the name of Burns with fond admiration were registered as his subjects, no king on earth would have such a realm. Finally could each feeling be changed into a flower, and cast down before his memory, a mountain would arise, and he would sit upon a rose of blossoms now at length without a thorn.

II.—MR. ANDREW LANG ON BURNS.

Address delivered before The Edinburgh Burns Club, Jan. 25th, 1892.

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GENTLEMEN, I have the great honour to propose on this his birthnight "The Immortal Memory of Burns." It is certain to be immortal! If the Last Man, described by Campbell, be a Scotsman (which is likely, owing to the survival of the fittest), he will

"Yon darkening Universe defy
To quench Burns's immortality,
Or shake his faith in Burns."

Yet, gentlemen, I must acknowledge that, as that excellent Covenanting chronicler, Wodrow, would have said, "I have no liberty in wrestling" with the subject of Burns. Whoever has read Wodrow, that Mr. Pepys of the Covenant, that most entertaining author, will remember the sorrows of soul into which pious Covenanters were frequently plunged. This seems a digression, but it is not really remote from our theme. If a pious lady were "assured of her interest" in the highest quarters, Wodrow, as her minister, would try to convince her that she was under a delusion. Even if she saw her chamber filled with "a glorious light," he would express the gravest doubts about the phenomenon. But, on the other hand, the Covenanters, when they were anxious to be devout, were subject to what they called "diabolical injections," which were "darted into their minds." Thus, one

holy man, though unlearned, suddenly reflected that there were "so many religions." If he had only attended Gifford lectures he might well have said so, poor fellow! "What, then," he asked himself, "were the odds against his religious choice being the right one?" Thus he had no liberty in wrestling. If he were confident, even ecstatic, there was the minister of Eastwood—a singular savoury Christian—to throw cold water on his enthusiasm. And on the other side there were the "diabolical injections," and the gloomy fact that there were "so many religions," out of which how shall an unlearned man draw the winning number? And now to the practical application of this parable from the history of the Kirk. I also have no liberty in wrestling. If I yield to the natural and spontaneous enthusiasm of my character and praise Burns as a glorious light, there are thousands of Mr. Wodrows to damp my ecstasies in the newspapers. There is that singular, savoury critic, the editor of never-mind-what *Observer*. This critic is convinced that his own opinion about Burns is verily the right opinion, and especially that it is infinitely superior to the view of tradition. For example, I myself and you, I have no doubt, admire "The Twa Dogs."

"My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barked wi' them—"

or rather have larket wi' them, for a textual quotation suggests, perhaps, rather hydrophobia than a sane and balanced criticism. Never, I think, was the problem of poverty and wealth stated with so much kindness, humour, and sympathy as by Cæsar and Luath. "The Twa Dogs" was the first poem of Burns I ever read, or rather listened to, as a very little boy, when it was read by my father. Probably we have all heard it from our fathers, and, therefore, tradition undoubtedly affects our estimate of its merits. But I do not misunderstand the aforesaid reviewer, he thinks that tradition is wrong here, and that our opinion of "The Twa Dogs" is much too high. On the other side, I believe in tradition. Tradition has a way of being in the right, and especially in literary questions. There is an American critic, indeed, who thinks that in literature tradition is usually all wrong, and that Miss Mary Anne Wilkins, and Miss Murfree, and perhaps he himself, are novelists greatly in advance of Scott, Thackeray, and Fielding. Still, I would rather back tradition in those cases; and in the case of Burns, tradition, our literary Mr. Wodrow tells us, is emphatically wrong about

"Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled!"

This poem, of which Mr. Carlyle had a high opinion, is "swaggering rant." I had not supposed that the gentleman who opposes it was so much akin to Mrs. Quickly in his modest tastes, that he, of all men, could not abide swagger.

"Wha for Scotland's king and law,
Freedom's sword would strongly draw,
Freemen stand or freemen fa',
Let him on wi' me."

Is it swagger; is it rant? The poem is not, somehow, one of my own especial favourites; but, on the whole, I fear I am on the side of tradition, and of Robbie, who admitted that he was "rantin'." But nothing shall persuade me that Burns, when he wrote the poem (he learned better afterwards), did not think that his Edward was Edward I. He could not possibly have described the æsthetic Edward II. as "a cruel and able usurper." Our critic next blames that favourite of tradition, the song "To Mary in Heaven." Well, I admit that Burns has written better things than—

"My Mary, dear departed shade!

Where is thy place of blissful rest?

See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?

Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?"

This song is under the disadvantage of being written in English. As far as I remember, Burns has made no other song under the influence of grief for the dead. It is possible that what Scott says about other poets applies to Burns. "The language of passion is almost always pure, as well as vehement; and it is no uncommon thing to hear a Scotsman, when overwhelmed by a countryman with a tone of bitter and fluent upbraiding, reply, by way of taunt to his adversary, 'You have gotten to your English.'" In the same way, Elspeth of the Craighburnfoot "wan till her English" in moments of excitement. Burns, then, uses English here under the stress of this unwonted passion; as he also does in rare moments of religious exaltation. Now, it is certain that in English verse he is never at his best. But I do not think that his comparative failure in expression is in any way ludicrous, nor that "To Mary in Heaven" can be dismissed as not one of his representative poems. It certainly may be compared not unfavourably with such lines as those of Byron about Alp—

"His arm is bare,

So is the blade of his scimitar,"

which are selected as peculiarly impressive utterances of that great writer. Nobody in his senses will maintain that all Burns's poems, or all of anybody's poems, are always on the same level of excellence. But, perhaps, we may say that Burns is at least as often equal to himself as any other great poet; he has not the ups and downs of Wordsworth or of Byron. In this country, at least, the depressing Mr. Wodrows are scarce. We are more plagued by a frantic enthusiasm which makes every Scot who writes regard Burns as his own private property, his special fetish, whom nobody else can speak of rightly, whom nobody else can with propriety praise. This is another thing which hinders our liberty of wrestling. For my sins, I lately published a book—a selection from Burns's poetry. No such selection can ever be satisfactory; in truth, as a counsel of perfection, we should advise people never to make selections at all.

But critics, like the Macallum More, have "got up wi' an unco bang, and gar'd me look about me." Somebody blamed me for calling the Stinchar the Stinchar. To call it out of its name were ungrateful. I have caught sea trout in the Stinchar, not in the Lugar. One humourist, in the gracious town of Glasgow, has blamed a poor editor for not printing a song which he *did* print. Another has accused him of denying to Burns the authorship of a piece which he did *not* deny. Indeed, I don't think that I satisfied anybody but a genial critic in Bonnie Dundee, who, on this occasion only, overlooked my sins as a Cockney, a native of the city that hears the music of Bow Bells. Well, these are personal matters, and not of cosmic importance; but is it not a fact that whatever we may say of Burns irritates one Scot or another, and makes him take up his confounded testimony against us? If you hint that he was "a liberal shepherd" in parts of his private conduct, you are "unco guid." If you say nothing about it, you leave a great element in his life and poetry out of sight. If you gloss over these things as seeming "genial venal faults," you make allowances for Burns which you would not make for anyone else, and which are not of the best example. Well, it is easiest and most pleasant to drop a hackneyed theme, which has been made the topic of poems and preachings: the world is weary of it. Still, all those charges of right-handed declinations and left-handed fallings-off do shackle our liberty. Then the Accuser of the Brethren comes with his diabolical injections. He whispers that there are so many poets, as there are "so many religions." Are we quite sure that we are worshipping the right poet? It is true that there are many poets, and I sometimes yield so far to the diabolical injections as to think that we might worship some of them a little more than we do. There is Fergusson, Burns's master, who died at twenty-four, a true poet, but so unfortunate, after death as in life, that I doubt if we have a proper critical edition of Fergusson, and certainly we have not such an account of his life as might well be written. Then, if ever a selection was excusable, it would be in the case of James Hogg. He was as unequal as Burns was equable; there is much dross and

quartz mingled in his gold. But a couple of handy volumes, containing the Shepherd's best verse and his best prose, especially the "Confession of a Justified Sinner," are what Scotland owes to "the most extraordinary man that ever wore a shepherd's maud." We are not a people of one poet only, though that is an impression which some of us try to give to the world. We neglect Lindsay and Dunbar. If using poetry for school books were not the best way to disgust children with poetry, I could wish that Dunbar and Lindsay were read in Scottish schools as Chaucer is used in English education. The ballads might certainly be so read, for nothing can spoil "Kinmont Willie" and "Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead." There is not such a body of ballad poetry, so noble, so pathetic, so spirited, so weird (excuse the term), in any language in the world. It is only too probable that many admirers of Burns have never read "Anster Fair." I doubt if some of them know who wrote "Lucy's Flitting." As for the songs, humorous, amorous, Jacobite, songs by ladies who, perhaps, sang only once; by peasants whose names are forgotten, but whose strains are immortal, I do not think it is too Chauvinistic to say that no country, except perhaps France, and England in the Elizabethan age, has their equals. We might make a Scottish anthology which, considering that we have but five centuries to choose from, and the Greeks had near two thousand, would rival that of Greece: would be the Golden Treasury of the North. We have but to listen a moment, in this din of an age which is not ending in songs, and we hear these sweet, piercing, and melancholy notes from the dead years, echoes of the horns blown in raids and reivings; echoes of the shepherd's pipe, of the wedding festival, of the dirge and the lament; Minstrel Burns grieving for—

"Many a place in evil case,
Where blythe folk kenned no sorrow;
Of Humes that dwelt in Leader braes,
And Scotts that dwelt in Yarrow."

Tradition wailing, for

"The flowers o' the forest are a' wede awa'."

As to the greatest of all, it is needless to speak. In the Odyssey, the returned wanderer

tells one of his people that he has come, and "no other Odysseus will come again for ever." No other Homer, no other Shakespeare, we might have said, will come again, but both came together in Walter Scott. Verily, we are not a people of one lonely poet, though in one Nature combined many of the voices of the past, much of the music of the future, in the good, the generous, the tender, the kindly, the homely, the impassioned Burns, the brightest of our lyrists, the most human of our satirists, the most fervid of the fervid Scots. We sometimes lament that he fell on evil days and evil tongues, we regret his narrow fortunes, we blush for all the reward that his country gave him. But the Maker and Master of poets knew best perhaps what was fitting, and had Burns not been born to labour and poverty, he could not have been the poet of poverty and labour. As to his later profession, in the life of Mr. Joseph Train—himself a writer of verse spirited and sincere—we learn how happy and how beneficent, how valuable to letters and to society the life of a Galloway gauger may be. Had Burns been living to-day, would the world that lay around him have been so fit to inspire him with song? The mirth, the sport, the tradition are "a' wede awa'." London would inevitably have sucked him into its dingy and disastrous Corrievreckan. He would have battered at the door of the theatre, he might have scribbled articles for the press and drunk in Fleet Street, and contributed verse to the magazines. His magnificent genius would have been frittered away in the struggle for life. He was not happy; no man with his passionate nature could be happy; few men of genius, indeed, have been happy, "even as mortals count happiness." They may not be more miserable than others, but we hear more of it. Whoever represents humanity, as Burns represents it, whoever is to utter its voice, as Burns utters it, must know its sufferings in his own heart, and endure them in his own life. Some bear them better, as Virgil—

"For gentle comes the world to those
That are born of gentle mould."

Some carry them more fiercely, as Burns, but

endure them all must, who would utter their complaint. In the Scottish phrase, we are not here as "doon-heartit loons" to "make a poor mouth" over Burns, nor greatly to blame the world for its treatment of him. He has received what he would have valued more than wealth, or ease, or an inglorious life, he has added renown to the country he loved, and for himself has gained that immortal garland, which is not to be run for without dust and sweat. In the work which I have already quoted, the "Analecta" of Wodrow, is a story of a youth who applied to the Presbytery of St. Andrews to be admitted to "trials." The Presbytery gave him a text, perhaps "Eat not of the cuckoo," out of which he could make nothing. As he wandered melancholy on the links, there came up to him "a stranger, in habit like a minister, with black coat and band," who offered to supply him with a discourse. After a slight formality, and accepting a document, which he subscribed with his blood, the youth received the sermon, which he preached with applause. But precious Mr. Blair smelled something in it, cross-questioned the youth, and advised him "that the man he took for a minister was the Devil." The document, by dint of prayer, was recovered, "dropped from the roof of the church," like a letter from a Mahatma. Gentlemen, when you invited me to speak again on Burns, I would gladly, as I walked on the links, deaf to cries of "Fore," have met a man in habit like a minister, with black coat and bands, and would willingly have backed the usual little bill if only he would have written me "an excellent discourse upon the text appointed." But none of the learned clergy was abroad on this occasion, and I had to do my darg as best I might for myself. But on one other text of Wodrow's I have a savoury liberty to expound. When the Jacobites were "blawing and bleezing" about 1709, he, or a friend of his, said—"Ye will shout for your Prince, ye will drink for your Prince, etc. It is well for us that we have not to do with a fighting and praying people." Now we Burns Clubs shout for our poet and drink for our poet, but we do not fight and pray. For example, we might, if we united, reprint the *Musical Museums*, words and airs, and documents in

general, to which Burns contributed, all for love and never for lucre, so many songs. These *Museums* are extremely difficult to procure. They are not only indispensable to students, but precious to all who love Scottish music. Other clubs, like the Roxburghe, the Bannatyne, the Wodrow, the Maitland,

have published all that can elucidate their heroes' works, or redound to their fame. Might we not do something practical for the memory of Burns, by putting our hands in our pockets and reprinting the original editions of his most popular and delightful songs?

III.—BURNS.

FROM "*POEMS, SONGS AND SONNETS.*" By JAMES COGHILL. Published by
ROBERT L. HOLMES, Glasgow, 1890.

'Twas late ae nicht—I had been drinkin'
Till baith my e'en were blear't an' blinkin'—
I laid me doon withoot ance thinkin'

Ocht o' the morn :
I felt my body doonward sinkin',
My saul up-borne.

Strauchtway I saw wi' spiritual e'e,
A gowden yett whilk stude ajee,
I keekit ben, but nocht could see
At the first blink ;
I claw'd my yeukin' pow awee
An' stude to think :

My loof upon my mou' I clappit,
Fu' lood I skirl'd an' sair I rappit,
Till a' my knickle-banes were chappit,
Syne lood an' clear
I heard ane cry, wha forward stappit,
"What seek ye here?"

"An't please ye, gracious Sir," quo' I,
"I kenna hoo I've speel'd sae high,
Till aiblins I ha'e reach'd the sky,
Or geyan near't"—
He scanned me owre, syne wi' a sigh,
My name he speir't.

I tauld him wha I was, an' what
When safe at hame, I workit at ;
Quo' he, "Puir callant, weel I wat,
Ye're nane owre wise ;
Ye ha'e been drinkin'—I see that—
Tak' my advice :

"When hame ye gang, gi'e owre the drink :
Faur wiser-like 'twad be, I think,
To let your siller cheery clink,
When sair ye've won 't,
Safe in your pooch, than gar't play jink,
As gin ye'd fun' 't.

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"There's ane up here"—he sigh'd fu' sair,
While thus he spak'—"wha had nae care
O' warl's gear, but he was rare
At rhymin' turns—"
Quo' I, "It's no the Bard o' Ayr—
No Robbie Burns?"

"'Tis e'en himsel'—Aul' Scotlan's pride—
The Bard wha aft did rhymin' stride
Owre muirs, or mused by burnie's side,
He'rt fu' o' glee ;
Nane like him, search the warl' wide,
Again ye'll see.

"His was a truly noble he'rt
Tho' whiles he played the fule man's pairt,
When he wi' drink gat owre weel sair't,
As aft, nae doot,
His strength o' body thus was wair't
Till life gaed oot.

"Nae doot he err'd ; aweel, what than?
In spite o' a', he was a man
Whase like sall ne'er again be fan'
In Scotlan' broad :
Sic like, since human life began,
The yirth ne'er trod.

"Hoo sweetly aft his luve he sang,
While Coila's maids he woo'd amang ;
Hoo keen he felt ilk human pang,
I needna tell—
Hoo deep the grief his he'rt that wrang
As Mailie fell.

"To ane wha hails frae Scotlan' fair,
'Twere needless, surely, time to wair
In tellin' owre what ilk ane there
Maun ken fu' weel ;
But hark ye, callant—wad ye care
To see the chiel?"

My breath at first awa' was ta'en
 At sic a prospect, held to ane
 Like me, wha had come there alane,
 Withoot invite ;
 When I'd got back my breath again,
 I thank't the Sprite.

"I kenna, sir, wha 'tis I see,
 That speaks sae kin'ly an' sae free,
 But yet," quo' I, "richt blythe I'll be
 Your word to take,
 To me a welcome kin' he'll gi'e
 For Scotlan's sake,"

He took my han' an' on did lead,
 Wi' halo bricht aroun' his heid :
 At length, quo' he, an' eased his speed,
 "Juist bide ye here—
 I'll come ere lang"—a smile he gi'ed—
 "Ne'er fash wi' fear."

As aff he gaed, I stude in dreid :
 The sauls I saw o' coontless deid,
 Yet fient a ane o' me took heed
 In a' the thrang ;
 Back cam' my guide—a sign he gi'ed
 To stap alang.

Straucht on I gaed, but sune the sheen
 O' Glory dazed my senses clean ;
 I raised my han' to rub my e'en
 An' clear my sicht—
 I felt as gin I'd ne'er ha'e seen
 For vera licht.

While thus I stude I heard a soun',
 A man's voice lilt a weel-kenn'd tune—
 The pathos fine o' "Bonnie Doon"—
 I shook for awe,
 An' raised my e'en—my he'rt gaed stoun'—
 Himsel' I saw.

He stude beside me there—the Bard
 Whase fate in Scotlan' was sae hard—
 Wha pray'd the Heavenly Po'oers to guard
 His native soil—
 Wha yet received sic scant reward
 For sairest toil.

"Robin," quo' I, "My wut's a-creel,
 Is this yersel', an' are ye weel ?
 I thocht ye'd been doon whaur the de'il,
 Reekin' wi' sweit,
 Progs up puir sauls wi' red-het steel,
 While sair they greit.

"Insteid o' whilk I see ye here,
 The Throne o' Grace an' Glory near—
 Fegs, frae this 'oor I'se ha'e nae fear
 Noo for mysel',
 To a' wha chance for you to speir,
 Thir news I'll tell."

My han' he grupp't, an' smiled fu' kin',
 An' bade me ne'er to fash my min'
 Tho' I suld whiles the guidance tine
 O' Heaven abune ;
 Quo' he, "The Licht sall surely shine
 Again fu' sune."

Awhile we crack'd o' aulden times,
 O' Scotlan's wrangs an' Scotlan's rhymes ;
 Belyve, like holiest Sabbath chimes,
 Low, sweet, an' clear,
 The master-strains o' mony climes
 Fell on oor ear.

Ae tune 'bune a', to Scots aye dear,
 I heard, an' marked the gushin' tear
 Rise an' hap doon like crystal clear,
 His manly cheek ;
 It touch'd his very saul sae near,
 He couldna speak.

What needs I tell o' a' that pass'd,
 Ilk word an' look frae first to last ?
 A veil owre some oor Bardie cast
 I daurna rend ;
 Quo' he, "Mak' sure ye haud it fast—
 Let nane e'er ken'd."

Hoo lang we stude, I canna tell,
 Sae deep was I aneth the spell
 That bun' me to the Bard himsel' ;
 The last I min'
 Was hoo, while heich his breist did swell,
 He, smilin' kin' :

"Ye'll in Aul' Scotlan' be ere lang ;
 Min' this : ye needna fear it wrang
 To drink a gless an' lilt a sang,
 Or kiss a lass ;
 Haud aye the Richt while on ye gang—
 Thro' life ye pass.

"Come Jan'war' twenty-fift', at e'en,
 When kin'ly Scots a' airts convene,
 To toom o' whisky stoups a wheen
 Unto my name,
 Ye'll tell, my he'rt to Scotlan's been
 For aye the same.

"Aft ha'e I langed deep in my min'
 To sen' Aul' Scotia greetin' kin',
 Just for the sake o' 'Auld Lang Syne'—
 To her ye'll beir
 My he'rt's wish—ne'er may Scotlan' tine
 Her Freedom dear."

He sigh'd fareweel, an' left my side,
 An' syne appeared ance mair my guide ;
 Wi' him alang I swift did glide
 Unto the yett—
*I wauken'd by a laigh dyke side,
 Baith dry an' wet.*

IV.—INCIDENTAL POETIC MENTION OF BURNS.

BY REV. ARTHUR JOHN LOCKHART.

"Brave singer of the coming time,
 Sweet minstrel of the joyous present,
 Crowned with the noblest wreath of rhyme,
 The holly-leaf of Ayrshire's peasant."
 —*Oliver W. Holmes.*

SINCE a pre-eminent function of the muse of Burns is to enkindle,—and no poet since his time has so "set song's lyric heart on fire" with emulation, in the breast of man "the wide world over,"—it is not singular that literature abounds in allusion to the great minstrel, and that the foremost masters of modern time have paid him especial or incidental tribute; and that many of these are in their happiest manner and of their finest quality. Such is Halleck's matchless blossom-wreath, fragrant of love; such is Campbell's burst of lyric rapture; such are the offerings of Whittier, and Holmes, and Lowell,—rarely more fortunate than in reverting affectionately to that land

"Where Ossian lies,
 And Coila's minstrel sung ;"

Such is Montgomery's felicitous tribute; and such are others, so widely known and justly admired as to make the business of citation needless here. These full-blown flowers of poesy have by the loving industry of a fellow-Scot been woven into a fadeless chaplet,* worthy of that "dear guest and ghost" who sits by many a fireside other than Longfellow's; for if brother-bards have not cast their elegies into his open grave, as it is said they did into that of Spenser, their golden leaves, thick as those of autumn, have fallen on the turf which wraps him.

But there are incidental tributes, or special ones, not so current nor frequently mentioned, the worth of which may justify this indication

* "Round Burns' Grave," Edited by John D. Ross.

of them. Byron, in the midst of biting satire on contemporary bards, pauses to glance behind at the graves of some relieved by time and death of all danger from his lances, and pays his brother of humbler rank a memorable debt of rhyme. Alluding, in a lamenting strain, to the alleged decadence of the muse, he exclaims:—

"What! must deserted Poesy still weep
 Where her last hopes with pious Cowper sleep?
 Unless, perchance, from his cold bier she turns
 To deck the turf that wraps her minstrel, Burns!"

What the exceedingly capricious Byron, in his vibrations of sympathy, might have said to the *living peasant*, had the actual Burns been able to approach him, may be matter of doubt; but, from his words on Bloomfield, and his sneer at Moore, and his brutality towards Keats, as well as from his cold treatments of Ebenezer Elliot, who tried to converse with him, we may infer that to the gifted peer the canonized bard was more acceptable than the Ayrshire Ploughman might have been. Yet, possibly, Burns' fascinating powers and commanding eloquence could have triumphed over Byron's heart, as did he who, with lesser genius, "dearly loved a lord." Cowper, whose name is by others sometimes associated with that of Burns, read the poems that were then newly storming the literary world; and, though somewhat hindered in his mastery of them by a dialect less familiar than now, saw their worth and gave them his meed of praise.

Elliot, himself, who was a passionate admirer of him to whom he could apply such

an astonishing epithet as "Niagara from Heaven," describes Burns as "the Scotchman who was not a slave;" and truly, for as he means it, in his ideas or in his spirit, Burns was never in bondage to any man. That is a plaintive, and yet a rousing strain, beginning,—

"That Heaven's belov'd die early
Prophetic pity mourns,"

wherein he goes on to tell us how, thus died Burns, the "lion-hearted." He is willing to abase himself before his master, as low as did ever Shelley before Byron, as willing to be even a flower he had celebrated :

"O would I were the daisy
That fell beneath his plough!"

And who can doubt to whom he would address the spiritual lyric,—

"Stay, mortal! here thy brother lies,—
The poet of the poor;"

the man who "honoured in a peasant's form the equal of the great."

Keats,—diverse from and yet kindred to Burns, in his mingling of poetic playfulness and intensity, in felicity of expression, and in his passionate delight in nature, and sympathy with her varied moods,—has made an incidental reference in his "Epistle to George Felton Mathew," which classes the Scottish singer with the heroic and patriotic leaders of his native land,—mingling his sorrow for Wallace and Burns:

"We next could tell
Of those who in the cause of freedom fell;
Of our own Alfred, of Helvetian Tell;
Of him whose name to every heart 's a solace,
High-minded and unbending William Wallace,
While to the rugged north our musing turns
Well might we drop a tear for him and Burns.

Better known are the lines in Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence," but—since never too well known—we quote them:

"I thought of Chatterton, the wondrous boy,
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride;
Of him who walked in glory and in joy
Behind his plough upon the mountain side."

How well the more prudent bard drew the moral suggested by the failures and mistakes of his earlier brothers! He is happier here than in the verses which celebrate the Scottish Bard more elaborately.

Among the paler flowers that were the poetic remnants of Keats' splendour, and

mark the period of his decadence,—for, whether by reason of failing health and spirits, or not, these latest things are decidedly inferior,—are several expressing his reverence for Burns: and, if they seem to indicate some coldness to the country the earlier poet so greatly loved, it may, in part, be set down to some untowardness in the day and mood of visitation, and to the spiritual chills and revulsions that come, almost inexplicably, to such sensitive natures. One of these, as its title intimates, was "written in the cottage where Burns was born:"

"This mortal body of a thousand days
Now fills, O Burns, a space in thine own room,
Where thou didst dream alone on budded bays,
Happy and thoughtless of thy day of doom!
My pulse is warm with thine own barley-bree,
My head is light with pledging a great soul,
My eyes are wandering, and I cannot see,
My fancy is dead and drunken at the goal;
Yet can I ope thy window-sash to find
The meadow thou hast trampled o'er and o'er;
Yet can I stamp my foot upon thy floor;
Yet can I think of these till thought is blind,—
Yet can I gulp a bumper to thy name,—
O smile among the shades, for this is fame!"

This expresses the desire many have felt to realize all that was possible, while visiting this "Mecca of the mind:" it has in it also a certain note of discouragement,—especially that last line,—for Keats had then been bitterly smitten. Then follows a bit of disillusionment written "on visiting Burns' tomb:"

"The town, the church-yard and the setting sun,
The clouds, the trees, the rounded hills, all seem,
Though beautiful, cold—strange—as in a dream.
The short-lived, paly summer is but won
From winter's ague, for one hour's gleam;
Though sapphire-warm, their stars do never beam;
All is cold beauty; pain is never done;
For who has mind to relish, Minos-wise,
The real of Beauty, free from that dead hue
Sickly imagination and sick pride
Cast wan upon it! Burns! with honour due
I oft have honoured thee. Great shadow, hide
Thy face: I sin against thy native skies!"

The latest,—“After visiting Burns' Birth-place,”—is at greater length, and records the reveries of

"One whose spirit had gone forth
To find the Bard's low cradle-place about the silent
north . . .
The cot where long ago was born
One who was great through mortal days, and died, of
fame unshorn."

It may frankly be said that these efforts are scarcely worthy of Keats' genius, or that of the bard commemorated; but they are worthy of citation in this place, as disclosing a genuine regard, however inadequately uttered.

Mrs. Browning, with the very sceptre-wand of genius, has, in her "Vision of Poets," summoned the great song-masters in that conclave of the enchanted wood. There, at her call,—with "Shakespeare, on whose forehead climb the crowns o' the world," and the others,—rises

" Burns, with pungent passionings
Set in his eyes. Deep lyric springs
Are of the fire-mount's issuings."

That slight stroke has the full meaning of whole poems, swift and sure. No poet of our time seems to have been more deeply impregnated with the "fire-seeds" sown from that Ayrshire fireside than the Bard of Amesbury,—our white Quaker of the western world. He always speaks with a sweetness and heartiness that marks genuine appreciation. So, in "A Memory," wherein, amid the musings by the study fire in winter, he recalls the singing of some fair and gentle companion who sang, on summer eves among the northern mountains,—

" Ca' the yowes,
The bonny yowes of Cluden."

Singer and listener have drifted apart, and the summer is gone, but still the song rings in the poet's mind, and serves as a mystic chord to unite them:

" Yet when the panes are frosty-starred,
And twilight's fire is gleaming,
I hear the songs of Scotland's bard
Sound softly through my dreaming !

" A song that lends to winter snows
The glow of summer weather,—
Again I hear thee ca' the yowes
To Cluden's hills of heather."

Again, in celebrating the Merrimack river, he reaps an inspiration from the thought how

" Poet-tuned, the Doon and Ayr
Go singing down their meadows ;

for the poet's perfect spell unites in a sort of fellowship all the wandering waters of the earth, as fully as does the irreversible law of nature. Dr. Holmes, who in one of his poems speaks of "Bonnie Doon" as being

worthy of singing "in that refulgent sphere that knows not sun or moon," is equally warm and candid in his expressions of love for Burns. In his "Song" at the banquet given to Dickens at Boston, 1842, he writes :

" The Irish harp no longer thrills,
Or breathes a fainter tone ;
The clarion blast from Scotland's hills,
Alas ! no more is blown !"

Eliza Cook, in a strain none the less genuine and heartsome because of its homeliness, has laid more than one wild flower at the shrine of this favourite. Directly she has spoken her admiration in two ringing lyrics, and indirectly in one of her longer poems. In enumerating the poets whose songs are to her a "joy forever," her debt to Burns is promptly acknowledged :

" Some heavy thought has often lost its weight
When 'Robie Burns' has come to share the hour,
Crooning his rhymes till my soul grew elate
With deep responses to his minstrel power."

Few are the singers, and lovers of song, moving in any range of thought or inspiration, who have not felt his touch of power, and somewhere acknowledged it. But some of our poets are silent; and we have wished, while pursuing our theme, that, by the arising of some occasion, they might have enshrined the name of this dear kinsman in their verse. What, for instance, Shelley thought of him who laid his bases broader on the earth than did his own ethereal muse, yet soared more rapturously into the empyrean; and if he had described him in his poetry, as he did the Ettrick Shepherd,—whom he termed "a pearl within an oyster shell, one of the richest of the deep,"—what he would have said. Or why Coleridge should not have included him in his "Monody on the Death of Chatterton," with "Spenser, gentlest bard divine," and Otway, child of misfortune; or why his name should not have found a place in a beautiful poem that Tennyson entitles, "The Daisy, Written at Edinburgh," save that it takes a course so different from what might be anticipated from the title. But fit occasion did not arise, and these, with other masters, were content to leave their love and reverence unspoken.

From fields of the minor muse what numerous examples might be culled. Poetic

friends of the author have written things that incite us to quote. George Martin, of Montreal, the creator of that beautiful "Marguerite," in his "Hallowe'en in Canada," glories in that land

"Where trod the feet of 'Cameron men,'"

And, with a sweetness never to grow faint—

"Where Burns exhaled his thrilling lays."

Thomas C. Latta, a venerable Scottish poet in America, whose name and verse recall traditions of an earlier day; and whose "Memorials of Auld Langsyne," and whose "School Examination," in particular, are "laid up in Lavender," like the dear wife to whom he sang his devotion,—he has not been silent about his "elder brother;"—and there are many others, but time and space fail.

But whoever speaks, in verse or prose, of this rich spring of melody,—this "little Valclusa Fountain . . . of Nature's own and most cunning workmanship, bursting from the depths of the earth, with a full gushing current, into the clear light of day,"—this bickering brook, running through every mood;—from which his boyhood drank earliest draughts, and his age the freshest;—whoever so speaks, or sings, does so with a more sprightly note,

or commands a strain of sweeter tenderness. The memory of him, and of his words, may be enough of inspiration. So, we close these observations with nothing fitter than the lines of Whittier's poem, read at the "Boston Celebration of the Hundredth Anniversary of his Birthday, 25th 1st Month, 1859:"

"And if the tender ear be jarred
That, haply, hears by turns
The saintly harp of Olney's bard,
The pastoral pipe of Burns,
No discord mars His perfect plan
Who gave them both a tongue;
For he who sings the love of man
The love of God hath sung!"

"To-day be every fault forgiven
Of him in whom we joy!
We take with thanks, the gold of Heaven
And leave the earth's alloy.
Be ours his music as of spring,
His sweetness as of flowers,
The songs the bard himself might sing
In holier ears than ours."

"Sweet airs of love and home, the hum
Of household melodies,
Come singing, as the robins come
To sing in door-yard trees.
And, heart to heart, two nations lean,
No rival wreaths to twine,
Not blending in eternal green
The holly and the pine!"

V.—AN AFTERNOON AT AYR.

BY J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

SITTING down to write that famous essay on Chaucer, the first thought that occurred to James Russell Lowell was whether it would really do to say anything more about Chaucer. Could any one hope to say anything, not new, but even fresh, on a topic so well worn? It might be doubted; and yet one is always the better for a walk in the morning air—a medicine which may be taken over and over again without any sense of sameness or any failure of its invigorating quality. There is in the work of this earliest of English poets a vernal property that soothes and refreshes in a way which no other has ever found the secret. One repeats his best passages a hundred times, and still at the hundredth time a breath of uncontaminated springtide seems to lift the hair upon the forehead. Thus did

the author of the "Biglow Papers" reply to the question he put to himself; and, with some trifling differences, thus would I answer myself in taking up the pen to write once again of Ayr and its pilgrim shrines. The subject is old, but so are many other subjects in which mankind is always finding something new. Nature and the scenes which genius has consecrated and raised to the heights of romance are ever fresh to those who have eyes to see, and if you have the true imagination you will look on these again and again, each time to be in some way the better for the experience. The unshifting character of Nature, the instability of all things human, are always fitting subjects for reflection. The rapid river of Time carries away in its ceaseless flow many things that

you may now see only in the old volumes that lie among the dust and the cobwebs on the top shelves. But the sun in the heavens, the face of the earth, the general conditions of human life—the sin, the misery, the heart-aches, the years of toil, the struggle for bread—these remain, as they have ever been, unchanged and unchanging.

If you are in the right spirit, some thoughts of this kind will surely come into your mind here at the pilgrim shrines of Ayr. And there are emotions, too, which you will find peculiar to the place you have journeyed to see. You may read what the prosaic biographers have said, but you cannot draw from the printed page the thrill that must surely pass through your heart here. To make the common marvellous, to see the divine in the casual, is the true mark of genius; and you can never appreciate to the full the genius of Burns—never understand how much he has glorified the land to which he gave the best of his tragic life—till you have seen for yourself how little extraordinary are the scenes and surroundings which he has lifted into the regions of romance. You look from its old bridge (as I do while jotting down these lines) upon the placid tree-embosomed Doon, and marvel that out of this little stream, no-wise essentially different from many other streams, should flow a song whose every line sets the pulse of emotion throbbing in every Scottish heart. Here the birds sang o' their loves, the thorns blossomed, the flowers bloomed and withered, the lovers made their vows to break them, and the river hurried on to the sea, countless ages before *he* shook his tiny fists in the little thatch-roofed cottage yonder. Yet no one made a song about it all till he, with the inextinguishable spark of God in his breast, came by and saw what no other had yet seen. This is why I love to go over the Burns' ground—to see what genius can do for common things. Will you come with me this autumn afternoon, while we "talk by the way" of whatever may interest us in connection with the early years of the poet?

Though the pilgrim shrines are not there, let us take a peep at Ayr before we start for Alloway. The town of "honest men and bonnie lasses" has a history stretching far

beyond the days of Burns, but even the guide-books are too much taken up with the idol of the place to spend much of their space on antiquarian details. Among other things, however, one learns that Ayr was made a royal burgh by William the Lion in 1202; that Alexander frequently held his Court in the town; that its fort was built by Cromwell in 1652; that from its port Bruce embarked with his little army in 1315 for the purpose of invading Ireland; that the early career of our heroic Wallace is inseparably connected with it; and so on. But in truth these things interest us not to-day. More attractive even in this ancient-looking hostelry in the High Street, the veritable inn from which the immortal Thomas Graham of Shanter started on the night of that eventful ride of which we shall have further thoughts when we reach the haunted kirk on the banks of the Doon. Observe the large square painting over the door, representing Tam as mounted on his grey mare Meg. The Souter, "his ancient, trusty, drouthy crony," stretches out his hand to receive the elevated palm of the worthy farmer, while the landlord holds up the lantern, and the landlady casts a gracious look towards her departing customers. The moralists have often stood here and cast their aspersions on Burns for his glorification of the wine cup, and his own, alas! too frequent, falls in the dust. Let such hypocrisy be far from us to-day. Was it not a remark of Plato's that no human soul misses truth of her own good will? The same may surely be said with reference to justice, sobriety, good-nature, and the like; and if we do but remember this it must help to sweeten our temper towards all men, and enable us to look on the failings of others with that gentle charity which suffereth long and is kind. "If to do," says Portia, in the "Merchant of Venice"—"If to do were as easy as to know what 'twere good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces." Yea, and he who could teach others the course to steer, yet ran himself life's mad career,

"Was quick to learn and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame."

But—we know the rest. The confession

is devout and poetical, but it is human, too : even genius is not altogether divine, and the strength of will by which the temptations and the pitfalls of the world are avoided is not always, nor often, an accompaniment of the God-given gift.

With a peep at the Twa Brigs, subject of one of the poet's best-known pieces, and a look at the new statue in front of the railway station, we may say farewell to the town, and set out for the real objects of our pilgrimage. The journey from Ayr to Alloway may be made by two roads, one leading straight through the hamlet, the other a more circuitous route by way of the racecourse and the sea. From both roads there is a lovely view stretching over the Frith of Clyde. Away to the left rises the bold, precipitous Heads of Ayr ; far out, the rugged peaks of Arran tower up in all their glory to break the thin line of the horizon ; Ailsa Craig meets the eye in the distance, reminding one of the poet's "Duncan Gray ;" and, if it is a clear day, one may even see something of the coast of Ireland. Is it not curious that Burns has said so little about the sea ? A few lines in "The Brigs o' Ayr" are all that I can recall as showing that his home lay along the coast ; and one or two allusions to be met with in other places do not lead one to think that he had any love for it. Such a scene as that we have before us here would have charmed the heart of either Byron or Shelley, and would certainly have produced something destined to live in literature.

While these reflections are passing through our minds, we are gradually nearing the Mecca of Scotland. The humble tenement in which the poet of his country was born is quite unmistakable, for it has preserved literally its cottage look, and stands, a thatched-roofed, white-washed, one-storey building, in the midst of houses as modern and as pretty as any in the country. Not so long ago the cottage was occupied as a public-house, where, it has been insinuated, not a few Ayr worthies of a bygone day were wont to qualify for coming duties in the Town Council by drinking ten tumblers of toddy at a sitting, and getting off sundry "screeds" of Burns by heart. To-day, however, you find yourself confronted by a turnstile at the door,

for the place has been purchased by the Burns' Monument Trustees, to whom the country owes a debt of the deepest gratitude. Regarded in the light of future events, it was not, perhaps, altogether without meaning that Burns's welcome to the world here was the somewhat rough one he has himself described. You hardly need to be reminded of how the father had built the little cottage with his own hands during his spare hours, and of how he had done the work so indifferently that some days after the poet's birth a "blast o' Januar' win'" blew down the gable, which led to the infant and his mother being removed to the temporary shelter of a neighbour's roof. No wonder, Burns would say in after years—"No wonder that one ushered into the world amid such a tempest should be the victim of stormy passions."

The old-fashioned kitchen, with its fireplace and chimney, up which you can see the blue-sky, and with its antique "dresser" and little windows, is pretty much as it was in Burns's day. The bed on which the poet was born stands just as it stood when his infant cries came first on the ear of the world. I believe there are people who could look on this most precious of all the cottage relics without emotion, just as there are people who find their greatest happiness on the dead level of the commonplace. But there are others whose uncovering of the head does not indicate everything that is passing through the mind. Standing in the little room here, I like to think quite as much of the father and the mother as of the son. What the one parent was we may judge from "The Cottar's Saturday Night"—a man of stern, upright character, whose struggles with the world had neither soured his disposition nor lessened the independent pride which has always been a characteristic of the better class of Scottish peasantry. The other was a woman of a superior mind, of a winning address, and as full of ballad and tradition as the mother of the Ettrick Shepherd, who in future years was to have his poetic susceptibilities aroused by the bard of Alloway. From both sides the son drew some of the qualities of a poet ; and we can well imagine him sitting by the fire-side here, receiving into his childish heart from the piety of the father and the fanciful

tales of the mother those images of genuine Scottish life which were by and by to take shape as well in "Tam o' Shanter" as in "The Cottar's Saturday Night." We hardly realise how much we owe to Burns's lowly origin—how it enabled him to taste for himself something of the trials of ordinary life, where the struggle is keenest and the failures are most frequent. It is this experience filtering through his verse that makes him the loved above all of his countrymen. He had the heart of a *man* in him—was, in fact, all heart and all man; and, as one who had to bear bitterly the curse of Eden in the sweat of his brow, once said to William Howitt, there is nothing, at least in a poor man's experience, bitter or sweet, which can happen to him but a line of Burns' springs into his mouth, and gives him courage and comfort if he needs it. There is much that is of interest to see in the little cottage of Alloway, including the table on which the last poem was written, and several manuscripts, letters, and Excise accounts, bearing the well-known, large, bold handwriting. But these things must not occupy our attention further, for the afternoon is passing, and there are other objects on which to set our eyes.

A very short distance from the cottage stands Alloway's haunted kirk, "where ghaists and houlets nightly cry." I find I never weary of churches, even though professionally connected with them. As R. Louis Stevenson, most charming of essayists, says, there is always something to see about a church, whether living worshippers or dead men's tombs. In the ordinary sense there are no "living worshippers" at Kirk Alloway now, but sure enough the dead men's tombs are there—name after name, and to each the conventional attributions and the idle dates—"a regiment of the unknown that had been the joy of mothers, and had thrilled with the illusions of youth, and at last, in the dim sick room, wrestled with the pangs of Old Mortality." But one tomb only has an interest for us to-day. The first memorial of the dead which meets the eye as we ascend the little outside stair from the highway is the stone which bears the names of William Burness and Agnes Brown, the poet's father and mother. The front of the slab bears but the

hackneyed forms of such conventional memorials, but the reverse side gives a place to these well-known lines:—

"O ye whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
Draw near with pious reverence and attend;
Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
The tender father and the generous friend;
The pitying heart that felt for human woe;
The dauntless heart that feared no human pride;
The friend of man, to vice alone a foe,
'For even his failings leaned to virtue's side.'"

The historians tell us that the old church of Alloway is supposed to have been erected about the year 1516, and its appearance to-day will certainly not lead to doubts as to its age. Even in Burns's time it was all but a roofless ruin, and since then nearly every bit of wood about it has been carried off, no doubt to be turned into "relics" and sent to the remotest corners of the earth. The old bell in the tiny belfry adds not a little to the romantic look of the ruin; and it has its history too. When the parishes of Alloway and Ayr were joined, an attempt was made by the Ayr authorities to carry off the bell, but the Alloway crofters manfully rose and successfully resisted the removal of the interesting relic. If there were as many open windows in the old ruins a hundred years ago as there are now there would assuredly be ample opportunity for Tam o' Shanter getting a good view of the uncanny dancing party on that memorable night—

"When, glimmering through the groaning trees,
Kirk Alloway seemed in a bleeze;
Through ilka bore the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing."

The "winnock bunker in the East," a small window, "where sat Auld Nick in shape o' beast," is still conspicuous enough; but there is rather too plentiful a crop of briars and nettles in the interior of the roofless ruin to allow of one entertaining the idea that there have been any recent displays of the kind which met the eyes of Tam o' Shanter.

The monument to the poet close by the auld kirk bears a striking resemblance to the one on the Calton Hill of Edinburgh. It stands on a little eminence, in the centre of a garden and shrubbery which are themselves worth going a long way to see. The view from the top of the structure is one of the most charming of its kind you are ever likely

to set eyes upon. It contains every element of the picturesque, whilst it also takes in almost every object of interest associated with the poet's name. In the museum on the ground floor you will find several things which it must delight the lover of Burns to see. I am not sure that anything was of more interest to me than Jean Armour's wedding ring. That thin little hoop of gold brings to the mind a very great deal that is both tragic and sad. It is given to the wives of very few geniuses to be perfectly happy, but Jean Armour had something more than what may be called external causes for disquietude of mind. For, in addition to Burns's passing fancies, was there not another that he had loved more tenderly—one whom his heart refused to forget? The brilliant planet that lights up the heavens these chill October nights (as I write) reminds me that on the 20th of this month, now more than a hundred years ago, a cruel fate laid the poet's Highland Mary to rest in the West Churchyard of Greenock instead of in the arms of him whose name she had promised one day to bear:—

“Thou lingering star with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usherest in the day
My Mary from my heart was torn.”

In the museum here is a very affecting memorial of that blissful day of parting love by the banks of the winding Ayr. It has often been told how at this final meeting Burns and Mary stood on opposite sides of a stream clasping their hands after having laved them in the current as a pledge of faithfulness to their vows of marriage. At the same time they exchanged Bibles with appropriate inscriptions on the fly-leaves; and the Bible presented by Burns now rests in the monument here, after crossing the Atlantic twice, and experiencing a singularly eventful career. The inscription in the poet's handwriting has almost faded out of sight, and if it remains as at present exposed to the light it will in a few years probably vanish entirely. I agree with another writer that the exhibition of the book without the exposure of the autograph should satisfy the public on consideration of the gain that would be secured. What has become of Mary's gift to Burns re-

mains a mystery; not even that little relic has survived her romantic career. Close beside the Bible and the ring are a couple of drinking glasses presented by the poet to the “Clarinda” of his Edinburgh days, who inspired those beautiful stanzas beginning “Ae fond kiss and then we sever.” The conjunction of all these objects is probably quite unintentional, but it serves to remind us once more of how “completely tinder,” as he phrased it, the heart of the poet was, and how little proof his constancy was against a pretty face or a charming manner. Within the monument grounds there is a picturesque little grotto containing statues of the two heroes of the immortal “Tam o' Shanter.” The statues are the work of a self-taught sculptor named Thom, who made a little fortune by exhibiting them throughout the country before they settled down here. They are exceedingly good—the Souter especially, with his jolly face, his inturned feet, and the careless twist of his apron.

From the top of the monument you can see all that is to be seen of the old bridge of Doon, but the pilgrimage must be made on foot if you are to realise to the best advantage the beauty of the scene, and the vividness of the “Tam o' Shanter” narrative. The rivers of home are dear in particular to all men, and surely doubly dear must be the Doon to those whose early years have been spent within sight of its “banks and braes.” If I were a native of Ayr, it would sadden me intensely to revisit these scenes of the early days, but that is just why I would hold them dear. As one nears the summit of the way, it is with mixed feelings that he goes back to the places where the first years were spent; and in the case of the Doon, the poet has thrown such a sentimental melancholy on its bosom and around its banks, that those who knew it as children must be loth to turn back and confront it. So at least I imagine from my own experience in other memory-haunted regions. How true it is that a man can never separate himself from his past history!

But the sun is sinking in the West, and we, too, must be “stepping Westward.” I hope it has been “good for us to be here.” There are some superfine souls who do not allow themselves the pleasure of what is good in

Burns, because of the little that is bad. These, happily, are but the insignificant minority, who know really less of the true Burns than they know of bigotry and its twin sister, ignorance. With men and women of upright feeling, there is no need to plead for the poet. He has himself said in immortal language what he was and what he was not, and the final weighing of the balance may be left to Him who only can adjust it. One thing we know, and that is, as Professor Wilson has somewhere said, that he has written many songs that slip into the heart, just like light, no one knows how, filling its chambers sweetly and silently, and leaving it nothing more to desire for perfect content-

ment. Rather, perhaps, we should say, sometimes when he sings, it is like listening to a linnet in the broom, a blackbird in the brake, or a laverock in the sky. They sing in the fulness of their joy as Nature teaches them. Thus did he, and the man, woman, or child, who is delighted not with such singing, be their virtues what they may, must never cherish the hope of a heavenly hereafter. For Burns himself, I think, as I cast a loving look on his early home, it is the most blessed thing that he has long since passed to that country where the hailstorms and the firestones do not reach, and where the heaviest laden wayfarer at length lays down the load.

VI.—ROBERT BURNS.

BY ANGUS ROSS.

WHILE streamlets flow, and daisies grow,
And lovers tread the banks of Doon,
In sweet delight, by day, by night,
Beneath the sun or shimmering moon,
While river to the sea returns,
We will remember ROBERT BURNS.

Bard of the heart, thy tender art,
Will cheer the cottar's humble home,
Thy stirring song, will make him strong,
'To bear whatever ills may come,
He tyranny with loathing spurns,
While he remembers ROBERT BURNS.

Whate're betide, your Scotland's pride,
Her sons in every land and clime,
Do sing thy lays, and sound thy praise,
In good Scotch prose or doric rhyme,
While loving hearts misfortune mourns,
They well remember ROBERT BURNS.

Thy deathless name, and peerless fame,
While Scottish blood runs in our veins,
Will never cease, but have a place,
To soothe our sorrows and our pains,
Until our flesh to dust returns,
We will remember ROBERT BURNS.

VII.—A DAY IN DUMFRIES.

BY J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

THE curious, proud-looking, weather-beaten, rain-soaked city of the old red sandstone has, I find, a story long enough to run into a large octavo of over nine hundred pages. What that story is, from first to last, probably no one but the local antiquary wants to know, and I certainly do not mean to tell it here to-day. It is written in the encyclopædias that "Burns was for some time an exciseman in Dumfries," and that, together with the fact that the poet rests in its old churchyard, is enough to make Dumfries for me the Mecca

of Scotland. It is true that the town has other claims to distinction among the towns which have helped to make history. It was in a monastery here that Bruce stabbed the Red Comyn, and Kirkpatrick made siccar. The old Mid Steeple still speaks of Inigo Jones, Border bloodshed, and the '45; and, as some one has said, still asserts the right of beauty to hinder business. Still the old bridge across the Nith brings back memories of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and tells stories—mythical it may be—of the

foresight and benevolence of Devorgilla Balliol. There are other notable reminiscences, no doubt, but they may be left to-day in the pages of the local history. It is enough for a literary visitor to know that the old town is the same that Carlyle rode into from Craigenputtock to give an order for a suit of homespun which should not be an un-*veracity*; and, best of all, to know that it is even the same old town upon which Burns, full of rheumatism and remorse, closed his eyes when he went all too soon from a world which, meaning no harm to him but only a little good to itself, knew not how to guard the great one whom Providence had lent it. Let us trace his footsteps for a brief hour or two of this glorious day of sunshine and the singing of birds.

Cast aside the guide book, whose stereotyped phraseology can only irritate to-day, and come up this little narrow close. We are making for the Globe Tavern; but before we enter its doors let us recall some words of Carlyle in that noble estimate of our national poet which I cannot help preferring to some of those works of the Sage, which yield so little in favour of the ease of the reader. These are the words we bring back to-day:—"Picturesque tourists, all manner of fashionable dangles after literature, and, far worse, all manner of convivial Mæcenases, hovered round him in his retreat; and his good as well as his weak qualities secured their influence over him. He was flattered by their notice, and his warm social nature made it impossible for him to shake them off, and hold on his way apart from them. These men, as we believe, were approximately his ruin. They wasted his precious time and his precious talent; they disturbed his composure, broke down his returning habits of temperance and assiduous contented exertion. Their pampering was baneful to him; their cruelty, which soon followed, was equally baneful."

"See Social Life and Glee sit down
All joyous and unthinking;
Till quite transmogrified they've grown
Debauchery and Drinking."

Now come. This cosy-looking old-fashioned parlour, made still cosier to-day by a fire which burns brightly in the capacious old

grate, is not to be entered without emotion. There, in that corner, carefully guarded by a pair of stout doors, stands the identical chair—silent witness of convivial meetings that no man may number—upon which the poet sat many an evening on the way to moral and physical destruction. The old table, upon which many a "pint-stoup" had stood to his order, is here too—used now for the book which holds the names of those who come to worship at his shrine. One need not put into words the picture of typical evenings here in those fateful closing years of the century. Carlyle has already said something for us, and has apportioned the blame with clearer insight and with better charity than those who have cast the stones. There is poetry, or perhaps we had better say verse, here too. Several panes of glass still hold the familiar hand, beginning now to be slightly effaced, for the windows of the Globe are kept spotlessly clean. Let us read one of the verses—

"O, lovely Polly Stewart,
O, charming Polly Stewart,
There's not a flower that blooms in May
That's half so fair as thou art."

Burns had too many passing fancies to make it worth our while to tell the story of Polly Stewart, further than to say that she was the daughter of the factor on the Closeburn estate, when the poet resided at Ellisland. And there is another name to recall as we stand in this parlour to-day. Well had it been for the poet had there been no drinking "howf" like the Globe; better still had there been no syren-servant like "Annie wi' the gowden locks," the subject of the song, "Yestreen I had a pint o' wine." Annie, otherwise Helen Ann Park, was barmaid here, and a niece of the landlady, Mrs. Hyslop. During the absence of his wife at Mauchline, Burns contracted a discreditable connection with the girl, with a result only too common to frail humanity. It was a little daughter, and—oh! rare Christian charity—Mrs. Burns adopted the child, and rocked it in the same cradle with her own infant.

Think of the sacrifice, and while you still think, look at this old workbox. It is "Bonnie Jean's." Why should it have a

place here? Never surely was more loving, gentle, suffering, uncomplaining wife than her whose fingers handled this interesting relic. Many a night must it have been her companion as she sat waiting patiently for him whose name she bore, while he, all forgetful of womanly anxiety, was as likely as not singing in all sincerity the challenge of his own rollicking song—

“Who last frae aff this chair shall fa’
He is the king amang us three.”

Mayhap it was her companion on that fateful night at the Globe, in January 1796. That night the old chair in the parlour here held its occupant longer than was even his wont. There was frost in the air and much snow on the ground as the poet passed up the close toward his little home in the street now known by his name. To the sober man it was a walk of less than five minutes, but hours elapsed before Burns reached his door. The inference is, alas! too plain. Read the local historian—“Affected by the liquor he had taken, and the freezing cold of the atmosphere, a drowsiness—dread prelude of the sleep of death—overpowered him, and he lay long insensible at the head of the close, where it joins with Shakespeare Street. He had been suffering previously from what Dr. Currie calls ‘an accidental complaint,’ which, with the strong medicine given to counteract it, disarmed his constitution, so that the merciless air of the month which, thirty-seven years before, ‘blew handsel in on Robin,’ pierced through his frame with unresisted and fatal influence.” It was a casual incident, no doubt, yet an incident which only too surely and certainly hastened the coming end. It is a sad thought, and we bid farewell to the Globe with less of joy in our hearts than the creature comforts of the courteous landlady might be supposed to infuse. There shall be no Pharisaical condemnation of Burns here. It is sufficient that we have to mourn over his hapless attempt to mingle in friendly union the common spirit of the world with the spirit of poetry, which, as Carlyle has said, is of a far different and altogether irreconcilable nature. The heart of a true poet and singer had been given him; and he “fell in an age, not of heroism

and religion, but of scepticism, selfishness and triviality, when true nobleness was little understood, and its place supplied by a hollow, dissocial, altogether barren and unfruitful principle of pride. The influences of that age, his open, kind, susceptible nature, to say nothing of his highly untoward situation, made it more than usually difficult for him to cast aside or rightly subordinate; the bitter spirit that was within him ever sternly demanded its rights, its supremacy; he spent his life in endeavouring to reconcile these two, and lost it, as he must lose it, without reconciling them.” What more than this need be said?

The house in which Burns breathed his last at present stands tenantless and empty. It is attached to an Industrial School, the officials of which are always willing to show it to the admiring stranger. There is some difficulty in getting a tenant with the necessary qualifications, two of these being, as explained to me, that there shall be no children, and that the house shall not be used for lodgers. Let us hope that an occupant may be found who will rise above the “tip”-grasping spirit of the age, and show a genuine love for the neat little domicile in which the poet of his country, young in years and poor in circumstances, closed his eyes for ever. There is a peculiar feeling in standing in these empty rooms. Can the imagination fill them again to-day? That night at the Globe had brought its effects when, on the 18th of July, 1796, a little spring-cart stopped a few yards from these walls, and out stepped a tall, gaunt, sickly-looking figure, returning after a fruitless search for health on the shores of the Solway. Allan Cunningham tells us that the poet stood with difficulty, and walked tottering towards the door we have just entered. It was a sad sight surely for the loving and faithful wife, who had remained here during his absence, and who was now struck dumb with grief. They laid him in this room to the South on the second floor, whence he was to go out no more alive. The last words he ever wrote came from thence, and they were to his father-in-law, imploring Mrs. Armour’s presence, as Mrs. Burns was daily expecting to be confined, and he felt that his own end was fast ap-

proaching. Upon the scenes which have so to speak localised these walls in the hearts of the poet's admirers, we cannot help dwelling to-day :—"The fitful flashes of kindly humour which escaped from him, as when he prayed a brother volunteer not to let the awkward squad fire over him ; the hopeless symptoms that set in on the 19th—a tremor that shook his bodily system, a fever that fired his blood and touched his brain ; the dawn of the 20th bringing no relief, so that Maxwell, his physician, begins to despair, Jessie Lewars, however, bearing up heroically while ministering to the dying patient ; and Bonnie Jean stealing in every now and then from her own bedroom opposite to see how he fares ; while Syme, Findlater, and others pass upstairs to take a farewell look of their illustrious friend ; the ensuing night, forerunner of the long starless night of the grave ; the morning of the 21st, when his life came to be measured by moments, for long before meridian the spirit of Burns, recalled from earth, had passed for ever away." The emotion of the moment is too strong : let us get back to earth in the office of the old local newspaper, where we may read the obituary notice. With our feet here in Dumfries, it is as interesting as any of the complete lives that have been written :—"Died here, on the morning of the 21st inst., and in the thirty-eighth year of his age, Robert Burns, the Scottish bard. His manly form and penetrating eye strikingly indicated extraordinary mental vigour. For originality of wit, rapidity of conception, and fluency of nervous phraseology, he was unrivalled. Animated by the fire of nature, he uttered sentiments which, by their pathos, melted the heart to tenderness, or expanded the mind by their sublimity. As a luminary emerging from behind a cloud, he arose at once into notice ; and his works and his name can never die while living divine poesy shall agitate the chords of the human heart." Humble scribe ! We thank thee for that tribute, inadequate as it is to express the loss which Scotland and the world had sustained.

And now let us pass to the old churchyard of St. Michael's where rests all that is mortal of him whose footsteps we trace to-day. As we go, shall we recall that haunting incident

told by Lockhart in his life of the poet ? One fine summer evening towards the close of his life, Burns was seen walking alone on the shady side of the High Street, while the opposite side was gay with groups of ladies and gentlemen drawn together for a County ball. Was every one eager to have a word with the poet ? Nay, the fine ladies and gentlemen—that painful class stationed in all provincial towns "behind the breastwork of gentility"—they literally passed him by on the other side. Alas ! as Carlyle says, when we think that Burns now sleeps, where bitter indignation can no longer lacerate his heart, and the most of those fair dames and frizzled gentlemen have long since lain down by his side in this old churchyard, where the breastwork of gentility is quite thrown down—who would not sigh over the thin delusions and foolish toys that divide heart from heart, and make man unmerciful to his brother ? The lairds and their ladies who branded with their veto him whom they had helped to mar—who seek *their* graves here to-day ? The sexton is busy, but he is busy with tourists, whose feet enter the gates only to make for the mausoleum yonder in the East corner.

"Such graves as his are pilgrim-shrines,
Shrines to no code or creed confined ;
The Delphian vales, the Palestines,
The Meccas of the mind."

This was not the first resting-place of the poet. When he was carried from his house that summer day now all but a hundred years ago, he was laid in the North-East corner of the cemetery, where for many years a simple slab of freestone, placed over the grave by his widow, was his only material monument. When the time came that his countrymen thought him worthy of a more handsome memorial, the body was removed and laid where it now rests. In life the victim of his so-called friends, Burns was in death the victim of the Vandals. Some may read the story of the second disturbance of the poet's remains—when the widow was laid beside him in 1834—without a single touch of indignation ; others of a less phlegmatic temperament may be pardoned for a certain warmth of feeling, if not of language. I look into the aforementioned voluminous "History of Dumfries" at this moment, and there I

read—"On the night preceding the interment (30th March, 1834) a number of gentlemen, after receiving due authority, descended into the vault and obtained a cast of the poet's skull for a phrenological purpose." After due authority! Who but Scotland and the world had a right to give any such authority? Dr. Blacklock of Dumfries drew up a report on the matter, but I forbear to quote the prosaic document. The cast was sent to the Edinburgh Phrenological Society, and with it in his hand George Combe put together an elaborate paper on the cerebral development of the poet. I am sceptical about the merits of phrenology, but as Mr. Combe is brief he may have his say—"No phrenologist can look upon this head, and consider the circumstances in which Burns was placed, without vivid feelings of regret. Burns must have walked the earth with a consciousness of great superiority over his associates in the station in which he was placed—of powers calculated for a higher sphere than that which he was able to reach—and of passions which he could with difficulty restrain, and which it was fatal to indulge. If he had been placed from infancy in the higher ranks of life, liberally educated, and employed in pursuits corresponding to his powers, the inferior portion of his nature would have lost its energy, while his better qualities would have assumed a decided and permanent superiority." Very learned, no doubt, but all this might have been said without disturbing the sacred dust. It seems to me that the jail of Dumfries has not formed a resting-place for all who have deserved its friendly offices. The vault was last opened for the interment of the poet's eldest son in

1857, and one is glad to know that it was then sealed, never more, we trust, to be disturbed till the trumpet shall sound and the dead be raised incorruptible. Who knows what that day may bring for him who wrote "The Cottar's Saturday Night," and who saw in his Bible more "sublime things" than some of his traducers have seen? Yes, who knows?

Here our sketch must end. But do not think that the theme of Burns and Dumfries has been exhausted. You must look on that statue in the Square (what delight it gave me to see a tiny bird alight on the marble knee and sit perched there for some seconds in the spring sunshine!); you must go to Bank Street with the poet, when, an unsuccessful farmer, he lands there in 1791; you must see Ellisland itself, which is but a few miles from Dumfries, taking on the way the old Abbey of Lincluden, beside whose roofless ruins the poet found inspiration more than once. And if you have more time than you know what to do with, never mind the shop windows, but cast yourself on the banks of the Nith—lovely stream, all the lovelier that *he* has sung its praise—and let the spirit of the surroundings, the silent memories of the city of the old red sandstone, enter into your soul. Thereafter, when you take your Burns in your hand it will be with a keener feeling of delight, with a more personal interest in the poet, mayhap also with a truer charity for the faults and the failings of him who has sung the lives and loves of men and women as they never were sung before his time, as they have not been sung since, and as, in all probability, they never will be sung again.

VIII.—ROBERT BURNS AND FREEMASONRY.

FROM "*SCOTLAND AND THE SCOTS*," BY PETER ROSS.

DURING the eighteenth century Freemasonry had reached the very highest pinnacle of popularity in Scotland. Its growth had been slow. For many generations it had hardly obtained recognition, but year after year, especially since Good King Robert the Bruce had founded the Royal Order of Scotland at Kilwinning, it steadily gathered strength. At

first both operative and speculative in reality, it bit by bit lost its practical qualities and became a purely speculative science. Except in one epoch, Freemasonry, so far as I can learn, never mixed in any of the perpetual political troubles which enliven the pages of Scotland's history. That epoch was the time of the Jacobites. Then, through the active

agency of one man—the Chevalier Ramsay, a native of Ayr—an attempt was made in France to associate the Order with the exiled family. It failed of its main purpose, although the fanciful degrees and rites propounded by Ramsay were received with genuine favour in France. Many thousands were initiated into the so-called “Scotch Rite” instituted and planned by him, and his work is still bearing active fruit even at the present day.

The eighteenth century was in many ways peculiarly adapted for bringing to the front the very qualities which endears the Order to those whose names are enrolled on its records. It was a time of political restlessness when it was often dangerous for a man to freely speak his opinions for fear of cowans and eavesdroppers. A sentiment of universal brotherhood was in the air, and men were looking for a new condition of things which might bind them more closely than ever into “union and friendship.” The old order of things was passing away when the affairs of the State were quietly left in the hands of a self-appointed few, and the people were regarded as mere ciphers, or as little better than hewers of wood and drawers of water. Men had come to realize the dignity of man, and groped in the dark blindly for some way to make that dignity recognized. In the end of the century the French stumbled upon a plan so full of horror that the world even yet shrinks from the bare recital. Fortunately for Scotland, its struggle for political freedom did not plunge it into a similar sea of blood.

But the unquiet which pervaded Europe had extended itself to Scotland and governed its history during the century, although the cool, practical common-sense of the people kept it within proper and governable bounds. But in Scotland there were many local matters which impelled, in all classes of the people, a desire for change and fraternal action. The Act of Union had taken away the ancient parliament of the kingdom; the nobility felt themselves reduced to the condition of mere provincial grandees, at least such of them as had not obtained a foothold at the English court. London had become the centre of government, and the change was too recent for people to become accommodated to it as they are now. The masses considered they

were ignored, the educated classes felt as though they were merely provincials, the aristocrats too often assumed a degree of false dignity which generally led them into playing the parts of petty tyrants. The best of all the people desired something which might bind them closely together, allow them to meet in fraternal fellowship, strengthen one another in all relations of life, and make friendship unalloyed, unselfish and pure. All these were offered to them by Freemasonry, and its offer was zealously and gladly seized. There was another reason which added to the popularity of the craft, and which unfortunately has to be told. It was pre-eminently a convivial age, and the reunion in the lodges of so many good, honest, congenial hearts made a social after-time in those days seem a necessity. When the craft passed from labour to refreshment, they made all the use of the latter stage which could be implied from its name, and often, after the serious business of the lodge was over, the choice spirits held merry-meetings which lasted long until after the “wee short hour ayont the twal.” That these meetings sometimes degenerated into mere orgies there can be little doubt, and from them came the epithet of “drucken Masons,” which still arises in the minds of many good people in Scotland when the craft is discussed. Those who have studied the life of Robert Ferguson, Burns’s “elder brother in the Muses,” or read Chambers’ “Traditions of Edinburgh,” know to what an extent convivial habits prevailed at that epoch; how every little coterie formed itself into a club; and how judges, preachers, magistrates, lawyers, statesmen, as well as tradesmen considered it no shame to be known as “two or three bottle men,” or to be so often drunk in public as well as in private that their dissipation created neither comment nor scandal. The age thought nothing of such indulgences; nay, the opposite was the case, and a professed abstainer at that period in Edinburgh would have been regarded as a knave or a fool, or perhaps as both. Judging by the time, the drinking habits which were then associated with Freemasonry were merely a necessary incident, a condition of things which would certainly be an accompaniment of all gatherings of men.

Fortunately the world has advanced since then, and in this, as in all other material things, Freemasonry has progressed in a corresponding degree.

In the year 1781 the Grand Master of Masons in Scotland was the Duke of Athol. In the fraternity, either holding office or as active members of the craft, were included, it seems to me, every man of mark in the country. Noblemen, county magnates, preachers, magistrates, teachers, farmers, and tradesmen of every degree were to be found in connection with lodge work, and, if we may judge from the records which have come down to us, all were enthusiastic seekers after light. In that year the Duke of Athol signed the charter which brought into Masonic affiliation the now prosperous and honoured Grand Lodge of the State of New York. On the fourth of July in the same year Robert Burns was initiated in St. David's Lodge, Tarbolton. He was then in his twenty-second year.

I do not wish to dwell upon the early life of Burns, or in fact upon any features of his career which are not incidental to my subject. But I must make an exception at this point, because I desire to correct two errors which seem to have established themselves in the minds of most of those who have written or spoken of Burns during recent years. It is the fashion to speak of the poet as though he were simply a peasant and at the best a superior ploughman. It is hardly correct to dub him by the first designation, for peasant, according to the common acceptance of that term, he never was. Neither is it right to regard him simply as a ploughman; for although he often held the plough and boasted of the independence which it afforded him, he was a ploughman only on his father's or his own holdings. He was a small farmer, but never either a simple ploughman or a peasant. I mention this not in any spirit derogatory to either peasants or ploughmen. God forbid! I recognize the true nobility of toil too highly to spurn any occupation which is of practical utility and by which a brother-man earns his bread. But there is no use, it seems to me, in giving these two classes the credit of having produced this heaven-inspired poet, when the honour be-

longs to quite another class—a class which in peace or in war has supplied the brain and muscle of Scotland for centuries; the real backbone of the country: the class of small working farmers, the “douce guidmen who held their own ploughs,” and from whose humble cottages have come forth sons who have graced the pulpit, the bar, and the academy, who have added to the mechanical genius and wealth of the country, and carried its banner—the blue cross of Saint Andrew—in triumph over all the world.

It has become common, too, to speak of Burns as an uneducated man. This is another mistake. From his earliest years his education was very carefully attended to by his father—a veritable prince among Scotchmen—and we have the testimony on record of his old schoolmaster to prove to our satisfaction that his education was really of a superior order even for lads in his own station of life. A boy who at fourteen years of age has had the benefit of being trained by such a man as William Burness, who can read Shakespeare with pleasure and is interested by such ponderous tomes as Stackhouse's “History of the Bible” and Ray's “Wisdom of God,” would not be considered ignorant even in our own day. Besides, Burns could read French fairly well and gave it a more or less careful study, and had acquired such a knowledge of Latin as to be able in after-years to adorn his correspondence with a quotation or a sentence now and again when the humour seized him. Surely we cannot call a boy with all these acquirements uneducated. And, again, Burns during his whole earthly career continued to be a close student of books as well as of men, and some time ago, in compiling from his letters and other sources a list of books which he actually read or had in his possession, I was much surprised at the variety, extent, and quality of his reading. To speak of Burns, therefore, as an uneducated man seems to me to be decidedly erroneous.

On first being admitted into a lodge the candidate is directed to kneel in prayer. It is fitting, therefore, that, before describing Burns' Masonic career, we should enquire into his religious principles. I know he has been denounced as a scoffer, an irreligious libertine, and even as an atheist, but such

charges have been made by persons who had no real knowledge of his character or sentiments, or who were so blinded by their own sense of self-righteousness as to see nothing which is good in others who are less demonstrative, perhaps, than they. But from his earliest boyhood until he passed away from this transitory scene in Dumfries, Burns was a firm believer in the supreme omnipotence and goodness of the Deity, and a continual thinker on religious matters. A perusal of his correspondence amply confirms this. He was by no means orthodox in his views; his thoughts often probed deep down into the mystery of things; he caricatured with bitter pen the extravagances of those who sheltered their own weaknesses and shortcomings under the cloak of religion; he ridiculed much of the teachings and theological quarrels of his day; he detested Calvinism; he had doubts, like Milton and Newton, of the Divinity of Christ, but he was a firm believer in an everlasting, ever-living, wise, just, and merciful God. The Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, an eloquent English preacher, expresses himself on this point as follows: "All his religion came from the heart; and it drove him, when he thought of his poor people and their hard lives, and how beautiful they often were with natural feeling; when he thought how much they suffered and how much was due to them, to refer the origin of their good to God, and to leave the righting of their wrongs to God. He went further, and threw over the lives of the poor the light of God. Every one knows the scene in the 'Cottar's Saturday Night'; every one has felt how solemn and patriarchal it is, and how all the charming gossip and pleasant human fun and modest love which charm us in it are dignified by the worship of God that follows. But that poem must not be taken as representing the religious feeling of Burns; it is purposely made religious; and all we can truly say of Burns is that, whether as regards his own art, or when he speaks of the lives and love of the poor, he was one of those men who at the end of the last century claimed for men a universal Father in God, and vindicated the poor as His children."

In the immortality of the soul, too, Burns was a believer. Sometimes he was oppressed

with fears and doubts on the subject, as are all men who think upon it at one time or other in their lives; sometimes he expressed these doubts rather freely, for, of all men who ever lived, Burns wore his heart upon his sleeve and allowed its actions to be seen by all who passed by; but on the whole, in reading his works, we can come to no other conclusion than that he believed there was a hereafter, at which, in some way, rewards or punishments were to be meted out, when men would have to render their just account to the Grand Architect of the universe. But even on this point he had some peculiar notions. In a letter written in 1788 he said: "A man conscious of having acted an honest part among his fellow-creatures, even granting that he may have been the sport, at times, of passions and instincts, goes to a Great Unknown Being who could have no other end in giving him existence but to make him happy, who gave him those passions and instincts and well known their force." In the two grand religious requirements of the Order, belief in an ever-living and true God and the immortality of the soul, therefore, Robert Burns was perfectly sound and consistent, and affirmed his faith in these dogmas with conscientious truth.

St. David's Lodge worked under the old Kilwinning Lodge; that is to say, it formed one of a group of lodges in the west of Scotland which obtained their charters from the mother-lodge. It was by no means an irregular body; for although the authority of the Grand Lodge of Scotland was then sufficiently strong to exert itself all over the country, the claims to regularity of the old lodge at Kilwinning, whose traditional records extended away back into the dim stages of Scottish as well as Masonic history, could hardly have been contemned. When the Grand Lodge of Scotland was organized in 1736, it was found that the records of Kilwinning Lodge had been destroyed by fire. The oldest records then remaining were those of St. Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh, which dated from 1598, and accordingly it was placed first on the roll of the Grand Lodge. This of course caused dissatisfaction in the west, and the Kilwinning Lodge withdrew, or rather held aloof, and fell back on its ancient rights

and prerogatives as a mother-lodge, which it held long before modern Grand Lodges were invented. This condition of things continued until 1808, when the Kilwinning brethren surrendered whatever ancient rights and privileges they claimed, and were finally given precedence on the Grand Lodge roll under the title of Ancient or Mother Lodge of Kilwinning No. o. I mention this bit of history to show that although Burns's lodge—St. David's—did not hold its charter from the Grand Lodge of Scotland, it was a regular and duly constituted lodge and was fully recognized as such. St. David's had received its charter in 1773 and was an offshoot from St. James Lodge, which was organized two years earlier. When Burns was initiated in July, 1781, and passed and raised on 1st October following, the fortunes of his mother-lodge were at a very low ebb. Jealousies and contentions had crept in among the brethren, all power of cohesion was gone, and neither work nor pleasure were experienced by the few who had held together and hoped for better times, for a change in the retrogressing state of the tide. Along with a few of the choice spirits, Burns left St. David's Lodge and re-established as a separate body the other lodge of St. James, which had in the meanwhile been in a condition of inertia, without, however, having forfeited its charter. This was in 1782, and from that time Burns's career as an active Mason may be said to have commenced.

St. James's Lodge, thus resuscitated, soon became the Masonic centre of attraction at Tarbolton. Although for a long time resident in Irvine and other places, which caused him a good deal of walking to allow of his being present at the various communications, he was both regular in his attendance and enthusiastic in his devotion to all the duties of the craft. In the ritual, such as it was, he soon became an expert, and at the after-meetings—the time allotted to refreshments, and at what is now delicately called the "symposium"—after the lodge was closed, he soon became "the king o' a' the core." No one could set the table in a roar like Robert Burns with his brilliant flashes of wit, his ready repartee, or his impromptu speeches. All these he gradually became accomplished

in after being but a short time among the "sons of light." Among the brethren he found men worthy of the display of his talents, and they seemed to be able to draw out of him some sparks, at least, of that brilliant fire of genius which burned within. It gave him his first introduction to the society of manhood, and these early meetings of the St. James's Lodge exerted an influence upon him which never lost its hold, and did more for moulding his mind into a frame fitted to produce the after-bursts of poetry and song than the world has ever been disposed to credit. And here I desire to draw particular attention to one point. Burns's enthusiasm for Masonry, and the associations into which it led him, have been blamed for forming those habits of open dissipation, that love of tavern revelry, which have been attributed to him. Even these have been exaggerated by the "unco guid," or by modern writers who did not understand the social habits and manners of Scotland during the latter half of the eighteenth century. But that Masonry tarnished or undermined Burns's "resolutions of amendment" may safely be denied on no less truthful and competent an authority than his own much-loved brother, Gilbert. "In Irvine," says Gilbert Burns, "Robert had contracted some acquaintances of a freer manner of thinking and living than he had been used to, whose society prepared him for overleaping the bounds of rigid virtue which had hitherto restrained him. During this period, also, he became a Freemason, which was his first introduction to the life of a boon companion. Yet, notwithstanding these circumstances, I do not recollect during the seven years we were at Lochlea, nor till towards the end of his commencing author—when his growing celebrity occasioned his being often in company—to have ever seen him intoxicated; nor was he at all given to drinking."

In St. James's Lodge Burns made many worthy acquaintances and formed friendships of great importance. First and foremost of these was Gavin Hamilton, writer, Mauchline—the truest friend and patron he ever had. His name is often mentioned in Burns's poetical and other writings, but never except with the utmost respect, honour, and gratitude. In one place he fitly sums up his virtues by describing him as

"The poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word and deed."

I do not think that Burns held any other man in the same respect that he held Gavin Hamilton, except his own peerless father, William Burness. Another member was Dr. Mackenzie, who did good service to Burns when he introduced him to Professor Dugald Stewart. This gentleman married Miss Helen Miller, one of the "Belles of Mauchline" whom the poet immortalized in a song. Mr. John Ballantyne, banker (and some time provost), Ayr, was another member, and his friendship for Burns was fraternal from first to last. When the bard was anxious to bring out a second edition of his works at Kilmarnock, Wilson, the printer, declined to risk the cost of the paper. Ballantyne, on hearing of the trouble, at once offered to advance whatever sum was necessary, but recommended the poet to make Edinburgh, instead of Kilmarnock, the place of publication. As is well known, circumstances caused Burns to fall in with this advice but rendered his friend's generosity unnecessary. It was through the efforts of Mr. Ballantyne that the New Bridge at Ayr was erected between 1786 and 1788, and to him Burns inscribed his grand poem of "The Brigs of Ayr." Another member, who appears to have been a particular crony of Burns, was John Rankine, a farmer, a great wag, and a prince of good fellows. To him Burns addressed a characteristic epistle beginning,

"O rough, rude, ready-witted Rankine,
The wale o' cocks for fun an' drinkin'."

Kay Wood the tailor, Manson the publican, Wilson the schoolmaster, and Humphrey the argumentative man, were likewise members of St. James's Lodge. In such a mixed company, composed of men of really superior intelligence, and some of them of really superior station, is it a wonder that the poet did not improve in mind and manners, that his knowledge of men and affairs was not increased, that his talent, or rather genius, was not developed? Burns found the lodge more congenial than any place else, and for a long time was most regular in his attendance at the different communications. We even find it stated that his enthusiasm was so great that

he held lodge meetings in his farm at Mossiel, which I take as meaning that he held Masonic schools there with the various young brethren and candidates, and among the latter was his brother, Gilbert, who on January 7, 1786, was initiated into the mysteries of the craft. Previous to that, on July 27, 1784, Burns was elevated to the position of deputy-master of his lodge, an office which caused him very often to preside at its meetings. It also made him more thoroughly acquainted with the visiting brethren of the highest degrees, one of whom, James Dalrymple, of Orangefield, stood fraternally by him in one of the most critical months of his life.

Early in 1786 Burns went to Kilmarnock for the purpose of bringing out the first edition of his poems, and at once began making himself at home with the brethren of St. John's Kilwinning Lodge there. As we can well imagine, he was received with enthusiasm, and formed a welcome addition to the ranks of the craft. To the brethren of that lodge he addressed a song, his first contribution to Masonic literature worth mentioning:—

"Ye sons of old Killie, assembled by Willie,*
To follow the noble vocation :
Your thrifty old mother has scarce such another
To sit in that honoured station.
I've little to say, but only to pray,
As praying's the *ton* of your fashion :
A prayer from the Muse you well may excuse
'Tis seldom her favourite passion.

"Ye powers who preside o'er the wind and the tide,
Who marked each element's border ;
Who formed this frame with beneficent aim,
Whose sovereign statute is order :
Within this dear mansion may wayward contention
Or withered envy ne'er enter,
May secrecy round be the mystical bound,
And brotherly love be the centre."

While waiting at Kilmarnock an incident occurred in the life of the bard full of importance, unsatisfactory mystery, magnificent poetry and sad reflections, and upon which I would not enter were it not that by his own act he stamped it with his Masonic seal and challenges us to consider his own share in it from his standpoint as a Mason. I refer to the incident of which Highland Mary was the heroine.

* Major William Parker, of Airloss, Master of St. John's Lodge.

How or when Burns became acquainted with Mary Campbell is not known, but in all likelihood it was while she was acting as a servant in the family of Gavin Hamilton at Mauchline. Whilst Burns was in the midst of his publication troubles, he had another and a still more serious case for perplexity on his hands. He had courted her who afterwards became his wife, the Bonnie Jean of so many of his finest songs, and she had trusted him too implicitly. Just when his worldly affairs were at their darkest she told him that she was soon to become a mother, and, unable to do anything else, he gave her a letter acknowledging her as his wife—a document which, according to the law of Scotland as commonly understood, made them legally married. When her condition became such that she could no longer hide it from her own family, Jean informed her father and showed him her lover's letter. The old man appears to have been insane with anger. He tore the letter into shreds, upbraided his daughter for associating with such a blackguard as Burns, and threatened to clap him into jail. There is no doubt that Burns loved Jean Armour, even although she at first seemed to second her father's frantic efforts for vengeance. But when the time was at hand for Jean to become a mother, and when her father was trying to have him arrested, Burns fell head over ears in love with Mary Campbell. One Sunday they met on the banks of the Ayr and solemnly plighted their troth to each other. Mary was sincere in her affection, so was Burns—at least the Bibles which he gave her on the occasion would lead us to infer. They were inscribed with verses from the Scriptures enforcing fidelity, and signed by Burns with his name and his mark as a Royal Arch Mason. They parted at the stream. Mary went to Greenock en route to the West Highlands to inform her friends of her approaching marriage to Burns. While sojourning at Greenock the girl sickened of a fever and died after a brief illness. Such is the story as commonly told by Burns himself and his biographers, but if we examine it, it presents many inconsistencies. By all writers, as well as by Burns himself, Mary is represented as a pure, high-minded girl,

generous in her impulses, and the very perfection of innocence. Yet she must have known that the morals of Burns were not of the purest, and she must also have known all about his intimacy with Jean Armour and been fully aware of its result. She must also have learned of Burns's letter acknowledging Jean as his wife, and yet, if pure, innocent, generous, and noble-minded, how was it possible for her to accept him as her betrothed? Again, the names and much of the writing on the Bibles given to Mary were afterwards partially obliterated by some one not in the habit of doing work requiring much delicacy of treatment. Now, it seems almost certain that these would not be removed by Mary's friends after her death. Why should they, since they were in every way honourable to her? Besides, Scotch peasants never cared to efface anything written or printed which bore the name of the Deity. We are left, therefore, to assume that Mary herself obliterated them, and to believe with Mr. Scott Douglas that Burns forgot all his vows as soon as she had passed from his sight, and that on learning this the poor creature effaced the names. Of Mary's part in the whole transaction, however, we can say nothing. She died and made no sign, and amongst all the gossip of the time nothing has survived of a nature substantial enough to enable us to consider the incident from her point of view. As to Burns, leaving aside the mystery with which he has chosen to invest the matter, and judging him simply by what he has told us and the events of his life at this time, his conduct was reprehensible in a marked degree. He must have known, if Mary was the pure, innocent girl he represented her to be—that he was only blasting her whole life; that he had no right to be paying her such attentions; and that in binding her love to him, as he did with all the superstitious ceremonies so common then among the simple-minded peasantry, he was weaving a chain round her which death only could rend asunder. Judging him by his own record, when Mary went away from Ayrshire he turned to find other hearts to charm, and to bask in the sunshine of new smiles. When he learned of her untimely death, however, he was terribly affected, and the anniversary

of that event, as it came round year after year, seems never to have been forgotten. He has immortalized her in some of the most beautiful and affecting lyrics in the entire realm of Scottish poetry, but all the poetry which has been given to the world since it began will not compensate for the wanton breaking of one real human heart.

Such is the story told by Burns and his biographers, and such are the sentiments to which it gives rise. But there is a great amount of mystery and discrepancy about it which has neither been fathomed nor reconciled, and in all probability never will. It is the only incident in Burns's life which he did not make perfectly clear to us, and why he should have so left it we are unable to understand. May be it is for the best that it remains in its present darkness. Of that we cannot judge.

The now famous volume of poems was published on July 31, 1786, and the edition was soon disposed of. Burns appears to have cleared £20 by the venture, and completed his arrangements for going to Jamaica, where he hoped to be far beyond the reach of the ire of old Armour, who still pursued him so closely that the bard had to "skulk to enable him to elude the grasp of the officers of the law. But all this did not prevent his regular attendance at lodge meetings. The records show this conclusively, and also that, notwithstanding his load of private troubles, he was as bright and perfect a "worker" as ever. On one occasion he went to Tarbolton to bid farewell to the brethren there, and sung for them a song he had composed in view of the occasion, and which had appeared in his book. It was his grandest effort in Masonic composition, and is as full of life and interest now as it was when he first committed it to paper :

" Adieu ! a heart-warm, fond adieu !
 Dear brothers of the mystic tie,
 Ye favoured, ye enlightened few—
 Companions of my social joy !
 Though I to foreign lands must hie
 Pursuing Fortune's sliddery ba',
 With melting heart and brimful eye
 I'll mind you still though far awa'.

" Oft have I met your social band
 And spent the cheerful, festive night ;
 Oft, honoured with supreme command,
 Presided o'er the sons of light,

And by that Hieroglyphic bright
 Which none but craftsmen ever saw,
 Strong mem'ry on my heart shall write
 Those happy scenes when far awa' !

" May freedom, harmony, and love
 Unite you in the grand design,
 Beneath the Omniscient Eye above,
 The glorious Architect divine !
 That you may keep th' unerring line
 Still rising by the plummet's law,
 Till order bright completely shine,
 Shall be my pray'r when far awa'.

" And you farewell ! whose merits claim
 Justly that highest badge to wear ;
 Heav'n bless your honour'd, noble name,
 To Masonry and Scotland dear !
 A last request permit me here :
 When yearly ye assemble a',
 One round, I ask it with a tear,
 To him, the bard that's far awa' !"

The allusion in the last verse is to Major-General James Montgomery, Grand Master of St. James's Lodge. On October 16, Burns was elected an honorary member of St. John's Lodge, Kilmarnock. His chest was packed ready for Greenock, to the vessel on which his passage had been secured for Jamaica, when the encouraging letter from Dr. Blacklock reached his hands. In accordance with its advice he threw all his other projects aside ; he determined to publish a new edition of his poems, and turned his footsteps towards Edinburgh in search of that encouragement which the good old blind poet so confidently predicted was in store for him.

Burns arrived in Edinburgh on the 28th November, 1786, and at once hunted up an old Mauchline friend and brother Mason, John Richmond, and shared his room. On the same day he read an announcement in a newspaper that a procession of the Grand Lodge and subordinate lodges would take place on St. Andrew's day, two days later, and, as usual, brethren from the country were invited to join in the parade. Burns doubtless saw the procession, if he did not take part in it, and noticed in its ranks many of the notables whom he had been acquainted with in Ayrshire. Among these were Mr. Dalrymple, of Orangefield, who was the first person of consequence to whom Burns introduced himself in the modern Athens, and who, as the poet wrote to Gavin Hamilton, proved a friend "who sticketh closer than a

brother." On December 7, a meeting of Canongate Kilwinning Lodge was held, into which Dalrymple passed Burns and introduced him to the master, the Hon. Henry Erskine. The lodge was then in the very height of its prosperity, and was regularly visited by all the illustrious men of the time in Scotland. The introduction to Harry Erskine, Dean of Faculty, was an important event to the poet, for it led to introductions to the Earl of Glencairn, and the members of the Caledonian Hunt, or at least most of them. His presence in Canongate Kilwinning opened the doors of St. Luke's, St. Mary's Chapel, Journeymen Masons', and other lodges to the poet. He soon acquired a prominence among the fraternity in Edinburgh equal to that he had won in Ayrshire, and his appearance in any lodge was welcomed with delight. Within a month he was hailed in St. Andrew's Lodge by Grand Master Charteris as "Caledonia's Bard" amidst multiplied honours and repeated acclamations. A month later he was admitted a member of Canongate Kilwinning, on motion of the Right Worshipful Master, Alexander Fergusson of Craigdarroch. The month of January, 1787, was a continued round of festivity with the poet; theatre, dinner, suppers, balls, assemblies, and social parties of all kinds followed each other in profusion, and at them all the Ayrshire farmer was the leading lion. Freemasons from the country crowded into any lodge meeting at which he was expected to be present, for the honour of shaking him by the hand. Even on the streets he was recognized by the multitude, and wherever he went he was the centre of attraction. He was raised to the highest pinnacle of popular favour and social prominence by his own genius, but his Masonic connection was the immediate support which enabled him to vault into such a position, and the craft stood behind him in all his progress during his first visit to the metropolis. Another peculiarity of Burns's Edinburgh reception was that few of those who paid him marked attention belonged to the Whig school of politics, which was also another characteristic of the majority of the active members of the fraternity.

On March 1, 1787, an unusually brilliant

meeting of Canongate Kilwinning Lodge was held, and at an early period in the evening the master, Fergusson of Craigdarroch, conferred on Burns the title of Poet-Laureate of the lodge, and he was crowned with a wreath of evergreen. Hence came to be fulfilled the vision he had so well described, in which the Scottish Muse crowned his brow with laurel:

" 'And wear thou this,' she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head;
The polish'd leaves and berries red
Did rustling play,
And like a passing thought she fled
In light away."

That night was probably, in Burns's own judgment, the climax of his career. Honoured by his brother Masons as no Mason of his time had been honoured, publicly acknowledged as "Caledonia's Bard" and Poet-Laureate of his lodge, his new volume passing rapidly through the press with the most brilliant prospects of success, and petted and caressed on every side, it was a grand position for a man to reach unaided by gentle birth or princely fortune; and that Burns retained his native modesty amidst it all is, as has often been said, the most wonderful feature of the glowing story.

Let us now see who were the friends Burns thus acquired in Edinburgh Masonic circles, and we will at once understand, if we have read the common narratives of his career in the capital, the important service they rendered to him during that memorable winter in the annals of Scottish literature. We will also be able to see that the magnificent reception he met with was owing to his Masonic connection, and to the enthusiasm which he had infused into the breasts of the "sons of light," as well as to the kindly, fraternal feelings they entertained for one of their number who more than all other men seemed to be endowed with true manhood, and who had proclaimed, in words that sank deep into all hearts and lingered lovingly on every tongue, the dignity of labour, the majesty of work. Highest in rank, Masonically, was Francis Charteris, Lord Elcho, the Grand Master. Then followed Lord Torphichen, a name which is associated with the history of Masonry from a very early period; Archibald Montgomery, Earl of

Eglinton; James Cunningham, Earl of Glencairn—through whose influence the Caledonian Hunt became the patrons of the second edition of the poems; Patrick Miller of Dalswinton (who will ever be remembered in connection with the early history of steam navigation; he was more than a mere sentimental admirer of the bard, for, after having met him in Canongate Kilwinning and learning of his circumstances, he sent him anonymously a ten-pound note—a generous and timely gift; he also afterwards offered Burns the choice of a farm at Dalswinton on his own terms, and the poet selected Ellisland—a true friend certainly, worthy in every way of the couplet, in which Burns has enshrined his memory); Dalrymple of Orangefield has already been mentioned; Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, a famous Edinburgh banker, who would have been Lord Pitsligo had his forbears attended to their own business instead of marching out with Prince Charlie in the rebellion of 1745; James Burnet, Lord Monboddo, one of the Lords of Session, a zealous believer in what is now known as the Darwinian theory long before Darwin was born, and one of the most curious characters which that cabinet of curiosities—the Edinburgh Court of Session—has furnished to the world; Fletcher Norton, afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons, who filled the senior warden's chair when Burns was crowned; Professor Dugald Stewart, the greatest of Scottish philosophers, who was chaplain of Kilwinning Lodge; Francis Napier, Lord Napier, an officer who figured in the war of the American Revolution under General Burgoyne; William St. Clair, Earl of Rosslyn, in whose family the Grand Mastership of Scotland was long hereditary. There were hundreds of lesser degree, including very many advocates and writers, such as Alexander Cunningham and William Dundas. Any one who knows Edinburgh must be aware that such legal gentry form the real backbone of its society. The scholastic profession also was represented by its leading lights. Among these was William Nicol, one of the masters in the High School, and, what is of infinitely more consequence now, one of the heroes of that grandest of all bacchanalian songs,

“Willie brewed a peck o' maut.”

Allan Masterton, another of the heroes of the song, was also a teacher in the High School and a brother in the craft.

Such were the leading men, so far as position and social standing were concerned, who met Burns in Masonic circles, and through whom he became the fashionable hero of the season. They took, from the first, a warm personal interest in him, his poetry, and his fortunes. With such friends to give him a brotherly grip and to stand by him as brothers, is it a wonder that the most exclusive and refined houses in the metropolis were open to his visits, and that in the most fashionable parlours he was received with the honours usually awarded to distinguished strangers? Certainly not. But the wonder is that he, so recently a petty farmer in a remote county, could at once take his place in such circles and hold his own against all comers—ministers, teachers, lawyers, soldiers, litterateurs, and men of the world—and that he charmed and fascinated the most aristocratic and refined dames with as much ease as he had won the hearts of the dairy-maids and farm lassies in his own native Coila.

Let me here point out, however, that although the names mentioned mainly belong to those who form what is known as the upper crust of society, Canongate Kilwinning introduced the poet to multitudes in the lower walks of life. Masonry then as now did not much regard social distinctions. It has an aristocracy of its own, sufficient for itself, and as honourable and as ancient as any other which has ever been created. In the lodge, therefore, Burns met the meek as well as the mighty. Tom Neil, the undertaker; Shon Dow, the town guardsman; William Woods, the tragedian; Peter Williamson, the adventurer, whose career in this country and Scotland is one of the most interesting stories imaginable, and many others whose names are still remembered in the gossip of old Edinburgh, enjoyed the poet's friendship and accorded him their tenderest fraternal regard. But I need not dwell upon them, for their evidence, although it proves the democracy of Masonry, is unnecessary to establish the point I desired to make—that Burns owed his introduction to Edinburgh society through the practical

interest which was taken in him by his Masonic friends.

The second edition of the poems appeared on April 21, 1787, and was an immediate success. A week or two after its appearance the poet started off on a tour through the Border Land, the grand storehouse of Scottish legendary lore. It had of course been familiar to him through the ballad minstrelsy of his native district, and, like a true poet, he had long cherished a desire of seeing for himself such a river as the Tweed, and the land of chivalry, foray, battle, and mystery which lay on either side of it. The tour led him to Dunse, Coldstream, Kelso, Berwick, Jedburgh, Melrose, and adjacent places, as well as a short distance into England. Judging by the commonplace book which he kept during the journey, the scenes through which he passed do not seem at any time to have sent him into any very excited state of poetic rapture. He was everywhere kindly received, visited many lodges along his route, (including that of St. Abb's at Eyemouth, where his companion, Bob Ainslie, was initiated into the Royal Arch), and mixed with the dignitaries and luminaries at each stopping place. In his commonplace book there are two entries, and only two, which claim our attention. At Dunse he was taken with a severe and sudden illness. It was in reality the first signal of warning that the end was coming, and, although it was unheeded as soon as it had passed over, he seems to have had a presentiment of its importance. "I am taken," he wrote, "extremely ill, with strong feverish symptoms, and take a servant of Mr. Hood's to watch me all night. Embittering remorse scares my fancy at the gloomy forebodings of death. I am determined to live for the future in such a manner as not to be scared at the approach of death. I am sure I could meet him with indifference but for the 'something beyond the grave.'" Soon after he witnessed a scene which also stirred him to the depths: "I go with Mr. Hood to see a roup of an unfortunate farmer's stock. Rigid economy and decent industry! do you preserve me from being the principal *dramatis persona* in such a scene of horror." Fine resolutions, good enough and complete enough, to have preserved Burns from the

misery of the end which came in its own time. They were applicable to mankind generally, like the moral texts which used to adorn the head-lines of the school copy-books, but they were not applicable to Robert Burns. His mental and physical calibre alike forbade his being governed by economy, rigid or otherwise, or by industry at all plodding or regular, nor was his fear of a hereafter strong enough to impel him to walk through life a perfect paragon of all the virtues. Had he been so constituted he would never have attempted poetry. He might have plodded on, become a staid elder in the kirk, gathered an abundance of gear, had a respectable funeral, and those who inherited his possessions would have commemorated his virtues on a neat tombstone. But *we* would have had no Robert Burns. By this time his gear would have been scattered, his virtues would have been forgotten or lost in the general maelstrom of time like the perfume of a wayside rose, and his tombstone would be unreadable, if it had not all crumbled away. The man might have been benefited by following out the good resolutions, but the poet would have suffered. The truth is that every man in this world has, according to the old saying, to "dree his weird." He has to "warsle through" and to contend with many obstacles which are beyond his ken. Burns could no more have settled down into the life of a "douce guidman" than he could have flown, and it was well for Scotland that such was the case. Ayrshire might have gained a praiseworthy farmer, learned in crops and soils, and rich in flocks and herds, but the history of Scottish poetry would have been without its central figure, and Ayrshire, as also Dumfries-shire, been shorn of their grandest name—a name which has brought them more wealth, fame, and honour than all the warriors who have sprung from their people, or all the titled nonentities who have fattened on their soils.

Burns, after the Border tour, returned to Ayrshire, which he soon after left for a short trip through the Highlands. Then he settled in Mauchline for a while, "a rhyming Mason-making, raking, aimless, idle fellow," as he confesses. He was again the leading Masonic light of the district, and Professor Dugald

Stewart, who visited Ayrshire during the summer of 1787, thus refers to the poet: "I was led by curiosity to attend for an hour or two a Mason lodge in Mauchline where Burns presided. He had occasion to make some short, unpremeditated compliments to different individuals, from whom he had no reason to expect a visit, and everything he said was happily conceived and favourably as well as fluently expressed. His manner of speaking in public had evidently the marks of practice in extempore elocution." A year later Burns had married Jean Armour and was settled on the farm of Ellisland, about six miles from Dumfries. On December 27, 1788, he was elected a member of St. Andrew's Lodge in that town. While at Ellisland, farming and gauging, we of course do not find that he mixed much in Masonic circles, and even after his final removal to Dumfries his attendance at lodge meetings appears to have been infrequent—six times in 1792, once in 1793, once in 1794, and twice in 1796, the last recorded visit being on April 14 of that year, almost three months before he "passed from the judgment of Dumfries and made his appeal to Time."

Thus we have followed Burns's Masonic career, at least in its most salient outlines, from the time he was initiated at Tarbolton until, at Dumfries, he was finally summoned to the Grand Lodge, the Lodge of Perfection on High, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides. With the exception of the Highland Mary incident—and that we may dismiss from our consideration, as its records are so incomplete and inconsistent—the connection of Burns with Freemasonry is in every way honourable to himself and to the fraternity. It found him an obscure lad whistling at the plough. It folded him in its arms, and shaped his brain and flooded his mind with its grand teachings. It elected him, even when he was completely unknown outside of its own local circle, into one of its high places, and made him, what nature intended him to be, a ruler among men. It aroused his genius, directed his Muse, and more or less coloured all his sentiments. It introduced him to society and to acquaintances and friends whom he never would have known but for its connection; it spread

abroad his fame over all the land, it filled his purse as it never had been filled before, and enabled him, when he settled down as a farmer once more, to begin the struggle of life again with brighter prospects than ever. And what did Burns give in return for all these? Little directly, so far as we are concerned. But in his time he was an enthusiastic worker, and in every way maintained the dignity of the craft. His own connection with it alone has given it an additional patent of nobility and certainly invested the craft in Scotland with a degree of kindly sentiment, a flavour of poetry, which it would not have had, had he never been initiated. It is true he did not write much Masonic poetry, but he proved the value of Masonry in the events of his own career, more clearly than though he had merely written in its praises. Of course we regret that his pen did not more frequently take up purely Masonic themes, for he would have placed the tenets of the profession and the character of its virtues before the world with a degree of clearness and beauty far beyond the power of any others who have written upon them. The specimens he has left us prove this beyond a doubt. I have already quoted his farewell address to the Tarbolton brethren and his verses to the lodge in Kilmarnock, and scattered through his poems are many graceful allusions which fully illustrate his apt and correct use of Masonic symbols, ritual and teaching. This regret was also expressed by the late Robert Morris, of Kentucky, who wrote: "How forcibly Burns could have written of the mallet, how sweetly of the trowel! The Hour Glass—what lessons it would have yielded him! For the poetry of Freemasonry is the offspring of the heart."

At the same time we must remember that in Burns's best and most serious writings, in the highest flights of his genius, the spirit of Masonry is ever present, leading, directing, dictating, and inspiring. The three principal rounds of the ladder shown to every initiate, for instance, are well illustrated: Faith, by "The Cottar's Saturday Night;" Hope, by his "Epistle to Lapraik;" and Charity, if by nothing better, by his "Address to the Deil," where his charity is not even bounded by the bottomless pit. The principal tenets of

Freemasonry have also their exemplifications in his works. How fully does his love for his brother man inspire the lines of "Man was made to mourn;" how well the duty of relieving the distressed caused him to write of the wounded hare! And his love of truth brought forth those terrible denunciations of hypocrisy, clothed in the mask of religion, which almost make our flesh creep as we read them. But, above all these, his Masonic training inspired him with that sense, not of the equality but of the brotherhood of man, which is the *summum bonum*, the grand end, of all true teaching, and the haven to which our footsteps are going. This sense of brotherhood coloured everything he wrote, and filled him with the brightest anticipations, even as he looked at the human misery which lay around him and felt the bitter pangs which

often coursed within his own breast. Even in the darkest of his moods he was filled with hope—hope for a better day; hope for an era of kindness, love, purity, and a truer and better manhood than the world had ever seen; and that hope found expression in one of his songs, one which the world will never allow to die, one which will ever cheer workers on in the march of progress, and whose grandest sentiment echoes the fondest aspirations of all true lovers of the human race:

"Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will, for a' that;
That sense and worth o'er a' the earth
May bear the gree, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brithers be for a' that."

IX.—ROBERT BURNS AND SCOTTISH SONG.—WHERE HE FOUND IT, AND HOW HE LEFT IT.

BY ROBERT FORD, Author of "*Thistledown*," etc., etc.

A SUCCESSFUL writer of poems, Burns was an eminently successful writer of songs. It was in the latter form of composition, indeed, that his great strength lay, and in which he touched the universal chord that has sent his name vibrating in liquid melody through every heart to the uttermost ends of the earth. Had he confined his genius to the composition of poems only—had such restraint been possible—and we are not forgetting that he wrote "The Cottar's Saturday Night," "Tam o' Shanter," and "The Vision," etc.—his fame might never have been more than local, certainly not more than national. But his muse was born with wings—wings to soar like the lark, and as he who soars must sing, so Robert Burns soared and sang as no Scottish poet ever did before his day, or since. It was he, in great measure, who made Scottish song the glorious thing it is—who lifted it out of the mire, so to speak, purged it of its grossness, and left it pure and undefiled—"a thing of beauty, and a joy for ever." There has been a class of people in the world—alas! they are not yet quite an extinct species—who, with ghoulish taste, have been fain to point

to the wicked things which Burns did, and some good things which he neglected to do. It were wiser and better to ignore the spots on the sun, or to cease from whining about them, and bless him rather for the light, the love, and the life which he has given to the world: wiser and better—yes; for David the Psalmist, has not been appointed to a place among the Saints of Holy Writ on account of his vices, but his virtues—to direct public thought and attention from the faults and failings of the *man* to the splendid moral service which the *poet* has rendered his country, by giving her, in the room and stead of a popular song book polluted on every page, a treasury of song which is like a human psalter by comparison. Prior to Burns's appearance on the stage of human existence, what was the condition of our national minstrelsy? Let us consider for a moment. Among such as are popular songs still, and will be while the world lasts, there were, of course, in the same faultless form in which they appear to-day, both Miss Eliot's and Mrs Cockburn's versions of "The Flowers of the Forest," Lady Anne Lindsay's "Auld Robin Gray," Jean Adams's "Nae

Luck About the House," George Halket's "Logie o' Buchan," Adam Skirving's "Johnnie Cope," Francis Semple's "Maggie Lauder," Robert Crawford's "Doun the Burn, Davie," the rare old humorous ditty, "Get Up and Bar the Door," and a few more. But these were the exceptions: and the greater bulk of the common songs of the country were unworthy of the music together with which they had become popular. Such of them as were not tainted—and grossly so—with vulgarity and vile innuendo, were the most puerile and feckless doggerel. Many songs that were popular then under titles which are popular still, let it be remembered, were vastly different in substance from the songs which these titles now represent. Only the heads are the same, the bodies are not. And it was largely the work of Burns, unaided and alone, and without fee or thought of recompense—although he stood much in need of money at the time, and could have commanded it—to supply these faultless heads with new and glorified bodies. Allan Ramsay, with the assistance of his friends Hamilton of Gilbertfield, Robert Crawford, and Lady Grizel Baillie, it is right to note, had made the same attempt a whole generation before, but only with partial success, as a perusal of the "Tea-table Miscellany" shows, and it remained for Robert Burns to arise and purge away what dross remained. The opportunity and the man haply met. At the time of Burns's appearance in Edinburgh in 1787, he discovered that a worthy tradesman named Johnson, who practised a style of music-engraving by punch or stamp-marking, had commenced a collection of the national songs and airs, under the title of the "Scots Musical Museum." The project caught the fancy of the poet, and he threw himself into it with characteristic ardour. He contributed songs of his own. He gathered others hitherto unedited. He furnished, purified, and improved versions of many homely ditties. From the date of his first letter to Johnson, in May, 1787, to his last in July, 1796, he never ceased to take a lively and active interest in the work, so that Cromek saw among Johnson's papers no fewer than one hundred and eighty-four of the pieces which compose the collection writ-

ten out in Burns's own hand. Another and more ambitious undertaking in the same line was next projected by George Thomson, Clerk to the Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Manufactures in Scotland. To this collection Burns was a more important contributor even than to Johnson's "Museum." Herein all the very best of his own original songs first appeared; and many of the songs which he had sent to Johnson he retouched for Thomson's collection. The whole of his correspondence with Thomson has been published, and throws a flood of light on the poet's mission and work as the regenerator of the national *volkslied*. And now, what of some of these regenerations? We have not time to look at them all here, but let us look at a few. "John Anderson, my Jo," as presented to us by Burns, is an expression of conjugal happiness which for purity of thought and tenderness of feeling is almost without a peer in literature. But there was an older song with the same title, which tradition says found its original in one John Anderson, a town-piper of Kelso. What of it? Here is the first verse:—

"John Anderson, my jo,
Cum in as ye gae by
And ye sall get a sheip's head
Weel baken in a pye;
Weel baken in a pye,
And a haggis in a pat,
John Anderson, my jo,
Cum in and ye'se get that."

What follows is unpresentable in our happily more refined times. In Burns's song of "Green Grow the Rashes, O," we have the most graceful and flattering compliment ever paid to womankind, when he says—

"Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest wark she classes, O;
Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,
And then she made the lasses, O."

and all through, the lyric—which the poet assures us was the genuine language of his heart—is one of great beauty and purity. But the original from which he took his cue and borrowed the music, and which is preserved in Herd's Collection, is a "sinful, rude, and wild" ditty. Burns's "Dainty Davie" is a love song perfectly unexceptionable on the score of purity—yea, it is purity's self. Not so the older song of the same

name, which furnished the air, however, and is said to have been composed on a somewhat indelicate incident that occurred in the life of the Rev. David Williamson during the times of the Persecution in Scotland—a worthy of whom it is affirmed that, after having married seven wives, he died minister of St. Cuthbert's in Edinburgh. To "Whistle o'er the lave o't," another rude old ditty, Burns gave a happy twist by turning it from its original form of amorous suggestiveness to a humorous description of a passionate and unruly wife. His beautiful lyric, with the refrain beginning "O, let me in this a'e nicht," was composed on the model of an older one—the base metal of which, as with a magician's touch, he transmuted into pure gold. His cry of the pure and loving heart, "For the sake o' Somebody," had its suggestion, also, in a rude and impure model, which has been preserved by Herd and others. Burns's rarely beautiful and melodious song "The Birks of Aberfeldy," the scene of which, very much by reason of its celebration in his verses, has drawn pilgrims from all parts of the world, was moulded on an older ditty, entitled "The Birks of Abergeldy," of no merit or interest beyond the fact that it furnished the model for an immortal lyric. It consists of two stanzas, which may be reproduced for the sake of comparison—

" Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
Will ye go, will ye go,
Bonnie lassie, will ye go
To the Birks of Abergeldy?
Ye sall get a gown of silk,
A gown of silk, a gown of silk;
Ye sall get a gown of silk
And a coat of calimanco.
Na, kind sir, I daurna gang,
I daurna gang, I daurna gang;
Na, kind sir, I daurna gang,
My minnie she'd be angry.
Sair, sair wad she flyte,
Wad she flyte, wad she flyte;
Sair, sair wad she flyte,
And sair wad she ban me."

When, in addition to the purification—we should say the glorification—of the above, and many more songs that might be named, and that to him we are indebted for the universal copy of "Auld Langsyne," whether he wrote it himself, as most capable critics

are inclined to think, or took it down, as he tells us, from an old man's singing, we consider that the same capable hand gave us such pure and enlivening, such healthy, beautiful, and ennobling original songs as "Afton Water," "Ae Fond Kiss," "Duncan Gray," "Last May a Braw Wooer," "Mary Morison," "My Nannie's Awa'," "O' a' the Airts the Wind can Blaw," "Rantin' Robin," "Scots Wha Hae," "Tam Glen," "The Banks o' Doon," "To Mary in Heaven," "The Lass o' Ballochmyle," and a hundred more that are dear to the common heart of humanity as is the sunshine of the field; it is then, and not till then, that we can form some fairly intelligent idea of Burns's great service to Scottish song, and where he found it, and how he left it.

His influence on subsequent poetical literature is deserving also of consideration, for the number and success of his imitators has been truly wonderful, but that would carry us beyond the scope of our subject. As to the influence of his songs on the whole human race, the proof of the purpose and power of these, that they were destined to be the expression of the universal human heart, as Gilfillan has remarked, is that they have become so. "They are not," as he says, "confined to Scotland or to Britain. They are sung in every land; and are as familiar and enthusiastically welcome among the Rocky Mountains as among the streams and lakes of Coila, among the burning sands of Arabia, as among the heather bloom and green bracken of Caledonia, under the Southern Cross of Australia and Queensland, as under the morning star rising over Criffel, or the evening sun seen from Ayr setting behind the dark mountains of Arran." There is scarcely another son of song in the world of whom this can be said. And because no other singer has so deftly crystalised and set in moving lyric form the common thought and fancy, the common desires and aspirations, of the common heart of humanity. His was no weird voice crying in the wilderness, but the voice of a common man singing in the ranks of toiling humanity, and sweetening and ennobling life and labour, and charming the world with the music and the power and the prophecy of his song.

X.—THE LAWRIES OF LOUDOUN.

BY REV. DR. CHARLES ROGERS.

THE name Lawrie, otherwise Lowry and Laurie, is common to several parts of Scotland, but the chief sept bearing the designation is connected with Dumfriesshire. From Stephen Laurie, a merchant in Dumfries, who flourished in the reign of James VI., descended Sir Robert Laurie of Maxwelton, whose daughter Anna (familiarily Annie), born in 1662, is the heroine of a popular song. Springing from the Dumfriesshire sept, the Rev. John Lawrie ministered some time at Macosquin, in Ireland, and was from thence, in 1689, called to the parish of Penpont. Translated to Auchinleck in 1692 he there discharged the pastoral duties till his death in 1704. His son James, licensed to preach in 1709, was on the 8th May, 1711, ordained minister of Kirkmichael, in the county of Ayr. He died on the 7th August, 1764, having fulfilled a ministry of 54 years. By his wife, Ann Ord (married 11th Sept., 1714, died 28th December, 1747), he had three sons and a daughter, Helen. The youngest son, George, became the Poet's friend. George Lawrie was born at the manse of Kirkmichael on 21st September, 1727. On the 28th September, 1763, he was ordained minister of Loudoun. He died on the 17th October, 1799, in his 78th year and the 37th year of his ministry. Dr. Lawrie married in 1764 Mary, daughter of Professor Archibald

Campbell of St. Andrews, with issue two sons and four daughters. Archibald, the younger and only surviving son, was baptized on the 26th July, 1768; was licensed to preach in 1791, and, on the 1st August, 1793, ordained assistant and successor to his father. He ministered at Loudoun till his death, which took place on the 5th May, 1837, in the 44th year of his ministry. He was twice married. By his first wife, Anne Adair, sister of Dr. James M'Kitterick Adair (who espoused the Poet's heroine, Charlotte Hamilton), he had four sons; also seven daughters. Of the sons, George James the eldest, was born on the 10th October, 1797. In 1843, he was admitted minister of Monkton, Ayrshire, in succession to the Rev. Thomas Burns, the Poet's nephew, who joined the Free Church. He continued to minister at Monkton till 1877, when he resigned his charge, and took up his residence at Hythe, in England. He died in 1878, in his 82nd year. A man of considerable theological learning, he received the degree of D.D. Subsequent to his death was issued from his pen a small brochure entitled "Songs and Miscellaneous Pieces." Two of his songs "Lang, Lang Syne," and "The Auld Manse," are widely popular. James Adair, the second son, born 25th June, 1801, became professor of surgery in the University of Glasgow.

XI.—THE KING O' MEN.

BY THOMAS C. LATTO.

SHOULD humble state our mirth provoke?
What folly to misca' that,
The sapling grows a stately oak
Wi' spreading shade an' a' that.
For a' that an' a' that,
His toils an' cares an' a' that,
We've seen a ploughman crowned at last
The King o' men for a' that.

Lang years sinsyne in Auld King Kyle
The gossips laughed an' a' that,

As wi' a cry an' half a smile
Wee Rab cam' hame, an' a' that.
A sturdy imp an' strong he grew
Was fond o' fun' an' a' that,
But Independence never knew
A braver son for a' that.

A frichtened mouse his heart wad move
A gowan crushed, an' a' that,
But woman's e'e, an' woman's love,
They were his muse for a' that.

He seized the wild lyre in his teens,
 He struck it sweet an' a' that,
 He thrilled the hearts o' Scottish Jeans
 An' wan their love, an' a' that.

Though his the ploughman's humble lot
 The spell was his, an' a' that,
 Alike to charm the ha' an' cot,
 Wi' witching lays an' a' that.
 A hunder years an' mair are through
 Of chequer'd hue, an' a' that.
 What he was then, an' what he's noo,
 I leave ye a' to draw that.

He sweeps, a meteor thro' the wain ;
 Its heights an' howes an' that,

And gatherin' glory for his train
 As on he rowes, an' a' that.
 The world lies prostrate at his feet—
 The East, the West, an' a' that,
 An' what's forgotten, Geordie's seat,
 To Robin's throne, an' a' that.

Let Genius take its mighty swing ;
 We've seen the day, an' a' that,
 A Cottar tower aboon a King,
 The *King o' Men* for a' that.
 For a' that, an' a' that,
 His poverty, an' a' that,
 We've seen a ploughman crowned at last
 The King o' men, for a' that.

XII.—THE LATE MR. JAMES M'KIE.

JAMES M'KIE, the well-known Burns collector and publisher, died at his residence in Kilmarnock on the 26th of September, 1891. He had nearly completed his 75th year, having been born in 1816. Few Scotchmen living or dead, if we except prominent men of genius, were so widely known as James M'Kie, whose reverence for Burns and everything associated with him was not unlike that which James Boswell bestowed on Dr. Johnson, and who in a way was almost as useful in getting the world at large to recognize the true character of his hero. Mr. M'Kie did not say or write much in a formal manner, but his life-work was accomplished equally well by the double process of collecting and publishing. His re-production of original editions of Burns's works did much years ago to produce that intimate knowledge of them which is, or rather was, possessed by the common people of Scotland, and which foreigners have been wont to comment on as proof alike of Burns's genius and the capacity

of his countrymen and women to appreciate true poetry. As a collector Mr. M'Kie knew no equal, and he either got possession of, or could tell the exact whereabouts of, every original edition, manuscript, or other important relic of the poet. The erection of the Burns monument at Kilmarnock, with its large and interesting collection of Burnsiana, was greatly the result of his labours, and in addition he was identified with the preparation of a Burns biography, a Burns calendar, and other similar works. Mr. M'Kie, who was brought up as a bookbinder, started business for himself first of all in Saltcoats, and there began the publication of Burns literature, which he subsequently carried on in Kilmarnock. He was a man of remarkable energy, unfailing integrity and genial manner, in whose company it was no ordinary pleasure to be privileged to spend a social hour, and who had a singular power of inspiring all with whom he came in contact with some of his own enthusiasm.

XIII.—THE LATE MR. JAMES GOULD.

MR. JAMES GOULD, another well-known Burns collector, died at Edinburgh on the 25th of March, 1890. For 25 years (1850-85) he was assistant manager of the "Cross"

Post-office. While engaged in the Post-office Mr. Gould began to collect interesting memoranda in connection with Burns, and in his labours in this department evinced a

persistency which has been held to amount to absolute genius. With respect to his "Burnsiana," as his Burns collections are called, he has been the means of gathering together materials which, in connection with the poet, will be consulted by all future students who desire to make their study complete regarding the bard or his poetry. Included in the collection are the genuine autographs of those who presided at the various centenary meetings in 1859, and also those of the poet's relatives living at the time, besides many eminent men in literature, science and art, who took part in the celebrations—in all, about three hundred. For these Mr. Gould penetrated into the obscurest corner of every British settlement, also into portions of the American States,

Africa and India. The first four of these interesting volumes have been deposited in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, and six other volumes have only recently been completed. Besides the "Burnsiana," Mr. Gould also compiled other interesting volumes, such as the "Old Market Cross," Edinburgh; "The High Street Calamity, Edinburgh," 1861; "St. Giles's Cathedral," previous to and after restoration, 1883; "Stray Green Leaves," an extraordinary collection of poetical pieces printed and autograph, the latter from the authors. For years Mr. Gould suffered from impaired health, being often months together in the sick chamber, but he steadily persevered with his favourite compilations until almost the hour of his death.

XIV.—THE CHAMPION.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR JOHN LOCKHART.

"Who shall speak for us?"

I.

AVAUNT! ye ghosts that upward start
To daunton and waylay the heart!
Humanity is hard beset;
—What! have we no fit champion yet?—
No lover of the people's weal,
By his own suffering taught to feel?
Yes! *he* has come, with song,—intent
On more than idle tournament—
Whose words are keen as polish'd steel!

II.

Welcome! to sons of want and toil,
Thou fellow-tiller of the soil!
Dreamer, and soul of high degree,
Lift unabash'd thy manly brow!
Thou claimest with the peer to be
Equal and brother,—nor wilt bow,
Servile to coronet or crown;
But thou wilt wither with thy frown
Each vain pretender.

III.

Burns! 'tis thou
Whose certain step, and val'rous tone
Shall waken courage like thine own!
The tyrant knave, though lord or duke,
Shall feel the might of thy rebuke;

For sternly hast thou warn'd away
Each human jackal from his prey:
With lusty cheer thou drawest nigh,
And swift life's craven spectres fly.

IV.

Poet!—and man who scornest fear!
How dear thou art—how doubly dear!
Name—image—mem'ry—of delight!
Still, ever as thou risest clear,
And glad'nest on our inmost sight,
How thought—that crept—takes singing
flight!
Thou ever hast the surest way
Of saying what our hearts would say,
And morning-dreams of youth return
With Bonny Doon and Bannockburn.

V.

But, where so many faint and die,
How much we need thy noble cry—
Thy call,—Arise! O brother-heart!
Be *thou* no slave—a man who art,—
Nor bow thou to another's will:
Perish the hand, where'er it be,
That fain would make a thrall of thee!

VI.

There may be one shall shrink from ill,
 Till heart must fail—for scorn can kill;
 While long neglect, to passionate
 And eager hearts, is darkest fate.
 There may be one shall drop the lyre—
 Son of thy frailties and thy fire,—
 But thou shalt teach him to aspire!
 When in despondency he lies
 One glimpse of thine imperial eyes
 Will pierce with kindling ray the dark
 That folds him; bidding him arise,
 From coldest lethargy, to mark
 How unto life's grand treasury
 The dauntless soul must bring the key;
 Ah, then his harp again rings true!
 While latent fires of love and pride,
 Fanned by thy breath, their flames renew,
 Reviving hopes he deem'd had died.

VII.

We hear their groaning, who complain,—
 The godlike thralls of glorious pain,—
 We glow and tremble at their tones!
 Horrors or raptures fill their eyes;
 From their gaunt hells eidolons rise;
 From their Caucasian torture-thrones
 Angels of music and of light
 Smiling descend;—Jove's malison
 Smiteth at once to bloom and blight;
 For, lo! each fire-stricken son
 Unveils his beatific sight!

VIII.

They agonize with a despair
 Vast as the glory of the night
 That crowns them, while august they bear
 Strange throes, as if they felt delight.
 Rapt far aloof, we scan each face;—
 These are the Titans of our race,
 Who blend, with charmèd tongues unknown,
 Their mystic language and our own.

IX.

Prometheus' icy peaks we dare,
 When Æschylus will lead us there;
 We listen, with a pitying dread,
 To Byron's scorn, and fierce despair;
 Or, when the bards will have it so,
 Down to the world of shades we go,—
 With Maro, or with Homer, tread
 The Hadean mansions of the dead:

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Like the perpetual roll of seas—
 Involving sorrow deeply rare—
 We hear our own Mæonides;
 We glow at thy unrivalled art—
 Great wizard of the human heart!
 Wond'ring, we scan the lurid glooms
 That Dante's awful muse presumes;
 Or, where the mystic circles rise,
 Sweetest, most radiant of blooms,—
 The blissful Rose of Paradise!
 But from each arduous flight we come,
 With music's mild amenities
 To smile, and find ourselves at home.

X.

But, hark! there comes a single tone,
 So simply human—like our own!
 No thunder of the Jovian rod,
 Nor groan of the crush'd demigod;
 It is a burthen all may know,—
 The voice of the great People's woe!
 Now it laments the doom forlorn
 Where to the toiling race is born;
 We hear the beasts their wisdom yield,—
 The creatures crying from the field;
 The maid's dismay at cruel wrong
 Breathes wildly forth in sweetest song:
 That voice sincerely may express
 Indignant wrath, or strong distress;
 But, when the agony is o'er,
 It hath its own glad ring once more!

XI.

O voice of Nature—voice of Burns!
 —Who e'er forgets what once he learns
 Out of thy heart-warm volume?
 Who loves, loves thee—as bird or dew
 On spire or spray, when morn returns:
 Who findeth thee, O bard! receives
 The best that genial Nature gives;—
 Hath odors, sunbeams, brooks and blossoms;
 Hath what is artless, native, true:
 What things are rare in poesy,
 Or rich in life, are met in thee.

XII.

But Love's first oracle art thou:
 The laurel from his laureat brow
 Anacreon lays at thy feet,—
 His song less varied and less sweet.
 Love's thrilling pipe, that wakes thy vales,
 O *this* to move us never fails!
 Long-heard, it still can stir our bosoms!

We speak thy name—and myriad voices
Chime one applause ! Lo ! Earth rejoices !
For thou with Nature still art one—
Her loving and belovèd son ;
And she who gave thy matchless flame
Hath canonized thine art and name.

XIII.

Thus all the land is as a shrine
Where thou hast been : our feet incline
From many a shore to seek for thine ;
But thy song's sunshine goeth forth,
Giving enchantment to the earth,
Where e'er hills rise or rivers run,
Or ocean glimmers in the sun.
So will we ever love to stray
By howlet-haunted Alloway,—
Softly "ye banks and braes" to croon—
The daisy at our heart to lay,
And pluck the wilding rose of Doon.

XIV.

And when did ever minstrel's lay
Breathe sweeter sorrow ! Blithely gay,
Not only with thy gleesome voice
Thou joyest, when we would rejoice ;
O sunny singer ! thou art near
To shed thy sympathetic tear :
Walking our common way of life,
Sharing our burden and our strife,
Thy grieving tone it soothes to hear.
Softly thou weep'st, where angels lull
Our sainted ones—our beautiful !
Thou keep'st, 'mid autumn's fading bloom,
Thy anniversary of the tomb :
Where Nith's memorial waters flow
Thou hast thy vigil, lone and low,
Till morning dew is on thy brow,
And in thy heart Love's holy vow :

Thy soul draws brightness of a star,
Or pitying Mary beams afar.

XV.

Rise, beauteous orb ! assoiling space
All but thy lustre shall efface,—
That spotless garment ever worn
When thou would'st "greet the early morn."
Unveil the brightness of thy face,
O Soul ! aris'n to Music's prime,
Where thy illustrious brothers climb,—
Though few may reach thy glorious place.
'Mid shadowy spaces thou art bright,
While all thy spots are lost in light ;
Nor taint nor soilure may we see,
Where earthly vesture parts from thee.

XVI.

Sing on as thy associates use
In their Valhalla of the Muse !
Yet must a portion of thy song
Still to our lowly earth belong.
Than the melodious lays that break
Out of thy heart, for Song's sweet sake,
Purer no chanting thrush, nor e'er
The heaven-ascended lark more clear !
Neath glint of sun, or glow of moon,
No brook hath a more heartsome tune ;
Not mountain-torrents when they go
With April-gladness in their flow,
Have more rejoicing ! Therefore sing !
And still be with us here—though wrong
Can never reach thee more—and song
Be thy vocation sweet ! For, though
Thrush-haunted woods be vocal,—loud
Shout the wing'd spirit of the cloud,—
Brook chime, or mountain torrent fall,—
Thou hast a rapture more than all !

XV.—REMINISCENCES OF ROBERT BURNS.

BY ROBERT C. HALL.

As it is nearly a hundred years since Burns died it is scarcely possible that anyone can now be living who has seen Burns face to face ; and there cannot be very many persons alive who have known even those who had seen Burns. It so happens that the writer of these lines is one of the younger members of

a large family whose father could boast of the great privilege of having seen Robert Burns a number of times in his younger days, and who often related to them the time and circumstances of this fortunate event. The writer is therefore tempted to record for those whom it may interest to hear, what he can

remember to have heard about it from his father. He often related to his family or friends around the winter's fireside the story of his meetings with the poet ; or when occasion served, to quote or recite some of his wonderfully graphic or humorous pieces. A native of Kelso, on the romantic banks of the Tweed, he was full of admiration for the beauties of his native place and the events of interest that happened in its neighbourhood. He was a school boy at the time that Walter Scott used to visit his aunt who resided in Kelso, and this also was a subject of interest to us young folks to hear anything personal about this other Scotch celebrity. Sir Walter Scott, in his autobiography, attributes his early appreciation of the beauties of nature, as well as his interest in historical romance, to his early residence in Kelso, which he describes as the most beautiful, if not the most romantic, of the villages in Scotland. The meeting of the two superb rivers, the Tweed and the Teviot, the venerable ruins of the Abbey, and other objects in the neighbourhood, together with the historical incidents or traditional legends associated with them, intensified his love and admiration for this neighbourhood ; and it was here, while living with his aunt in Kelso, that, under the shade of a large plane tree in the garden, that he first read the "*Percy Reliques*," which doubtless gave a bent to his genius, and supplied him in after years with the material for some of his prose and poetic romances. In Scott's diary, recently published, he alludes to a visit to this old garden in 1827, and relates how the "plane tree" had been destroyed one severe winter. He does not state, however, that the wood of this tree, when cut down, was formed into all sorts of boxes and other articles as "*souvenirs*" of himself? One of these (a frame) my father treasured, and always had a picture of Kelso in it. My father was about the same age or a little younger than Scott, but he did not remember him at the Grammar School. He, however, often saw him in Kelso or the neighbourhood walking about in his limping way, like a "*bubblyjock*," as he said, or sitting in some retired spot, or on the banks of the Tweed reading a book. He knew his younger brother Thomas Scott, and I have often

heard him relate how one morning very early, when a number of school boys were swimming in the Tweed near the Old Bridge, he heard some one calling out that young Scott was missing, and being a good swimmer went in and out of the arches of the bridge until he saw his red hair just sinking as it were, and he dived down and brought him safely to the shore. Young Scott had had an attack of cramp from the coldness of the water. Of course the two young Scotts were then only known as two school boys. In after years my father often saw Scott in Edinburgh, and was one of the first to suspect him as the author of the *Waverley* novels. Some of the early editions in the three volumes to the novel which he bought when they first came out, I still possess. I have often visited the house and garden where Scott lived as a boy, and seen the spot where the celebrated plane tree stood, as the cottage at one time belonged to a branch of our family, and the first letter I ever received from my father was written from this cottage, and on a table made from the said tree. But to return to my father's recollections. I have often heard him speak of his earliest, when he remembered hearing his father and some of their neighbours at the close of the American War (in the early part of 1782) speaking of the news just arrived of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis and all his army to General Washington ! Shortly after this time my father would doubtless hear of or read some of Burns poems, which spread rapidly amongst the people of the Lowlands long before the outside public heard of them. At any rate, he was a reader of them in 1787, when Burns visited the neighbourhood of Kelso, after bringing out the Edinburgh edition. I have heard my father say that when Burns first crossed Kelso Bridge, he was so astonished at the beauty of the scene that he gave a "*lang whistle*," as expressive of his feelings of admiration of the beautiful scene which was thus suddenly revealed to him. My father, however, was not in Kelso when this happened, but more fortunately for him he was in the neighbouring town of Dunse on a visit to an uncle, where he had better chances of meeting the poet, and one afternoon as he was sitting on the sill in the

recess of the window in the parlour of his uncle's house, reading the new Edinburgh edition of Burns's poems, which contained the first engraved portrait of the author—who should be shown in but Burns himself. He had come in with the father of his young Edinburgh friend, Robert Ainslie, with whom he was staying in the neighbourhood of Dunse, and who had brought him in to see my father's uncle—one of the principal residents in the town. One or two others had also come in at the same time, and the young man reading the poems was not noticed, but as he sat there quietly listening to their conversation he closely watched the poet and compared him to the portrait in the book, and wondered at the likeness—perhaps the first engraving he had ever seen of any living person. I have, of course, often heard him tell of his delight at thus meeting Burns, whom he described as tall and well made, of very dark complexion, and with brilliant black eyes, which sparkled as he spoke in a wonderful manner. He did not remember any of the conversation, as it was mostly about farming and the people in the neighbourhood, but as they sat there talking for an hour or more—as they sipped their toddy, the usual thing in those days when a call was made—he had plenty of time to watch the countenance of the immortal bard. Curiously enough, Burns, who always took great interest in young people, did not notice the young man with the book, as he was partly hid by the recess of the window, or he would have been greatly pleased to have found anyone reading his new volume of poems. The next day was Sunday, and my father saw him again as he was entering the Parish Church of Dunse with the Ainslies, and as their pew was next to his uncle's he had another chance of seeing Burns to advantage. As they stood up to pray it so happened that they were next to each other with only the division of the pew between them, and so my father managed to let his elbow touch Burns's that he might be able to say he had touched the poet! This part of the story reminds me that I remember seeing a verification of this in the shape of a paragraph in the *Glasgow Citizen* of the 10th August, 1844 (which my father showed me at the time), relating to the

Burns festival, and which he said he did not expect they would have put into the paper:—
“The following interesting reminiscences was appended to the signature of a gentleman in Liverpool ordering a copy of to-day's *Citizen*:—‘Ane wha rubbed shouthers wi' the Poet i' the Auld Kirk o' Dunse in 1787, o' whilk he is no a little proud.’”

As Burns was in Dunse and the neighbourhood for some time, as he relates in his journal, my father saw him on several other occasions. One of these I well remember hearing thus described:—One bright May morning my father was tempted out as early as six o'clock, his object being to ascend to the top of Dunse Law, from which there is a splendid view of the “valley of the Merse,” as it is called, with the Cheviot hills on the south of the Tweed, and a distant view to the east of Berwick, with its tall steeple and high-arched bridge away on the horizon. When he reached the top, and close to him, he saw Burns lying flat on the grass with his elbows on the ground and his chin and head supported by his hands, evidently lost in a dream as he gazed at the lovely view before him. Burns, as he heard some one approaching, suddenly sprang to his feet, and walked away in the opposite direction, evidently not wishing his thoughts to be disturbed. This, I think, was the last time my father saw him. I have, however, omitted to mention that my father was witness, as he often told us, of a little incident, the meaning of which was only explained by Robert Ainslie many years after—viz., When he was in the Auld Kirk o' Dunse, listening to Dr. Bowmaker's preaching, he noticed Burns writing something on a piece of paper and then passing it to Miss Ainslie! This was the now well-known occasion on which the preacher—a character in his way (to whom Burns alludes in his journal)—was denouncing in his usually strong and violent manner against “obstinate sinners,” during which Burns had observed Miss Ainslie turning over the leaves of her Bible as if in search of the text, when he took out a slip of paper from his pocket and wrote on it the well-known lines, which he presented to her:—

“Fair maid, you need not take the hint
Nor idle texts pursue,

'Twas guilty sinners that he meant,
Not angels such as you !"

My father had a splendid memory for quotations, and in conversation often introduced them, especially passages from Burns, whose poems he seemed to know all off by heart, and which he would repeat in a vigorous and dramatic way, and with the broad Scotch accent. There are many old friends of his still living who remember this habit, and the stories he would tell of meeting Burns. They remember especially his earnest way of telling how Burns, in one of his walks near Dunse, crossed the Border with Robert Ainslie, and when he first trod on English ground how he doffed his hat, and then kneeling reverently, repeated the last two verses from "The Cottar's Saturday Night," and which my father in telling the story would repeat so earnestly, as if himself inspired with the noble words in which Burns had apostrophised his native land !

Among his other recollections which he used to relate in reference to Burns was the story of the sudden appearance in Edinburgh, long after the poet's death, of a supposed portrait of Burns by Peter Taylor, and as this portrait has lately caused considerable discussion I will relate his account of it, not merely as I remember his telling it, but from his written notes to a printed pamphlet published by Constable about the portrait, as well as a long letter from my father to his old friend Alexander Ireland, of Manchester, and formerly of Edinburgh, giving a full account of his seeing the picture and the part he took in reference to it. It appears that this letter was written in 1851 at the request of Mr. Ireland, who had often heard my father tell what he knew of it, that he might send it to his friend Robert Chambers, of Edinburgh, who, I fancy, had an idea of having the Taylor portrait engraved for his new edition of the life of Burns in 1851. If so, he refrained from using the portrait in consequence of this letter. The letter was found among Mr. Chambers' papers a few years ago, and returned to Mr. Ireland. The reading of this letter revived and confirmed all my own recollections, and caused me to read more about Burns than I had ever done before. The letter is rather long, but so

interesting in itself that I make no apology for giving it in full :—

"Liverpool, 27th April, 1851.

"Mr. Alexander Ireland.

"My Dear Sir,—In obedience to your request I herewith send you a few lines on the subject of the supposed, or as I should rather say spurious, likeness of our great poet, intended to be palmed on the public as an original and correct likeness. That Mr. Aitkin, the partner of Constable, believed it to be what the painter or possessor of it represented I have no doubt ; but that he was imposed on I am equally sure, and for the following reasons :—

"When living in Edinburgh (1828 or 29) my friend Mr. John Aitkin called and requested me to go with him and see a portrait of a personage that I should soon recognise. I accompanied him to the back office in Waterloo Place where hung a painting of a person. I looked at it, but I did not recognise any resemblance to anyone I had ever seen, and told him so, when he said—

"‘You don't perceive any resemblance to Robert Burns ?’"

"‘No,’ I repeated, ‘not the smallest.’ ‘That is very odd,’ he said in a tone of surprise and disappointment, adding, ‘I was in hopes of having your testimonial to its correctness, and had made up my mind to present you with a copy of it framed in the manner of the one before you.’"

"My reply to that was that I would never hang it up in my house as a picture of Burns. Indeed, I told him I feared he had been imposed upon. He then asked me if I knew ‘Dr. John M'Kenzie, surgeon, an old acquaintance of Burns ?’ I told him ‘I did, and intimately,’ on which he asked me if I would get him to call and see the picture. I replied that I would be glad to do so, ‘and that I should not mention a syllable of it to him or influence his opinion in any way on the subject—a subject which I considered, so to speak, all but a sacred one.’"

"I sent for the Doctor, who soon made his appearance. I then introduced him to Mr. Aitkin, and left them together. The former returned in a few minutes (my office being close to Constable's). Like myself, he not only could trace no resemblance, but

added that it could never have been intended for Burns, and this he told to Mr. Aitkin. I then begged Dr. M'Kenzie to see Mr. William Tennant, who married the daughter of Dr. Dalrymple ('Dalrymple mild'), and whose opinion would go far to confirm ours, should we be correct. Mr. Tennant's testimony in all respects coincided with my own and Dr. M'Kenzie's. As with the Doctor, not a hint of the subject was given to Mr. Tennant; indeed, he considered it a joke, and could not speak of it for laughing.

"I then proposed that we three should take the liberty to call on Mr. Nasmyth, who resided in Queen Street. We did so, and on mentioning our errand we were most cordially received by the venerable artist. He ran through the whole history of his engagement with Creech to take Burns's likeness with a view to embellish the title page of the Edinburgh edition, which he then was preparing for publication (1787). Mr. Nasmyth further told us he felt unwilling to undertake the task, he not being a portrait but a landscape painter. There being at the time no good hand in that in Edinburgh, Mr. Creech on pressing him earnestly he consented, and with a view to become acquainted with the "*phiz*" of the bard, as he expressed it, the two were engaged to meet next morning at Creech's at breakfast. They then set out on a pilgrimage to the Pentlands, and down the Esk to Roslin, Hawthornden, and Lasswade, and returned with the publisher to supper. Having progressed thus far, next morning the artist commenced his work, which, by the way, as he informed us, never was entirely finished, for having got so far in the sketching of the picture, and being himself (Mr. N.) so much pleased with it, he was afraid to proceed any further lest he should spoil it, and nothing more was done to it. Such is the true history of the only likeness ever made of the poet, as Mr. Nasmyth informed us, he never having heard of any other; and as to the one in the possession of Constable's house, on his name being mentioned—I mean the painter's name—I think it was a Mr. Taylor, of Leith—he said he knew him, and that he never pretended to be otherwise than a coach painter.

"I might mention that Dr. M'Kenzie and

Mr. William Tennant were Ayrshire men, and knew the poet well, especially the former. Being in Dunse in 1787, just after the publication of the first Edinburgh edition, Burns himself being there at the time on a visit to the family of his friend Robert Ainslie, of Berrywell, near Dunse, the writer often saw the poet, and sitting on the sill of a window in the same room at a friend's where Burns, with several other respectable inhabitants of the town, were conversing, and having the volume in my hand, I occasionally looked at the picture and then at the poet, and wondered at the resemblance. Mr. Ainslie told me, on mentioning our proceedings anent the Constable picture, that he knew of no such picture. That Nasmyth's was a good likeness of the features of the poet; 'but, in my opinion,' he observed, 'no painter living could take it, none being able to give that expressive flash of the eye that Burns possessed. He never witnessed such an eye.'"

The letter concludes with:—

"I have often told you of the extraordinary meeting of myself with Burns's 'young friend' Andrew Aikin, and Mr. Nasmyth, the writer having been introduced to Mr. Aikin by Dr. Gairdner (son-in-law of Mr. Tennant already mentioned) on board the steam packet from Leith to London, and of our being joined by Mr. Bruce, the son of one of the poet's heroines—I have forgotten the name of the song, but it goes, 'I lo'ed her mickle and lang.' This meeting, should it be of any use to Mr. Chambers, I will give some other time—the above being as much as I can do at present, being pretty well for one bordering on eighty years, etc. . . . Trusting the above may prove useful to the publisher and author of the life and writings of the poet, I remain, dear sir, yours, "WILLIAM HALL."

In addition to the above letter, I have the original pamphlet, issued, I suppose, some time after these gentlemen had seen the picture by Constable, entitled "Unpublished Remains of Robert Burns—Lockhart's third edition of his life—Account of a lately discovered portrait, with letters concerning it." This seems to have been issued as an advertisement, as it is called on the reverse side of the title page "Extracts from the Edinburgh Literary Journal. No. 54." It has no date,

but I presume it to be either 1828 or 1829. After giving a description of the newly-discovered portrait, it says: "it was painted by the late Peter Taylor, an artist of considerable celebrity at the time of Burns's visit to Edinburgh in 1786," and "that Buchan, Bonar, and Nasmyth were his contemporaries, and entertained the highest respect for his abilities." Both of these statements were quite incorrect, and we have seen above that Nasmyth, when asked about him, said the very reverse of all this. The sentences altogether sound very much like Lockhart's random statements, of which Chambers, Scott Douglas, and others pointed out so many in his "Life of Burns," and many of which he had to retract.

The article then quotes several letters from Sir Walter Scott, Mrs. Burns, Clarinda, etc. Scott only saw him once, and the two ladies were then very old, and perhaps unwilling to disoblige the Constables. At any rate my father, in reference to their receiving copies of the picture, wrote in ink at the foot of the page:—"A bribe! they offered me a copy of the print enclosed in an elegant frame," (signed with his initials, W. H.). Then in reference to these and other letters which are not quoted, but of whom it is said "they all agree in speaking of the portrait as amazingly like the original, my father adds another note thus:—

"It is somewhat remarkable that the respectable publishers of this print could not procure, although strongly urged to do so, the concurrence of several intimate friends of the poet then alive, namely—Dr. John M'Kenzie, Mr. Nasmyth, Mr. Robert Ainslie, and Mr. Wm. Tennant. Mr. Syme's account of it, as his son informed me, was anything but flattering. I also, who had often seen the poet, was strongly urged to lend my testimony to the likeness, but I could not do so, not being able to perceive any. The four first-named gentlemen, all of them intimately acquainted with Burns, laughed at the idea of its being thought a likeness."

The portrait was engraved by J. Horsburg, and published about 1830, and caused a considerable discussion, but was mostly condemned as an impossible likeness of Robert

Burns. Some thought the portrait rather like Gilbert Burns, who was not considered like his brother. Then many of these opinions were made on the engraving (which I do not myself recollect), and it may have been made to look more like Burns than the painting. The supposed artist, however, does not seem to have painted any other likeness that is known, and this one at the best is a very poor picture as a work of art. It looks older and stouter and totally different to Nasmyth's picture, painted the same year that this is said to have been taken. The Taylor portrait is still in the National Portrait Gallery, in Queen Street, Edinburgh, where I first saw it in 1887, when it was exhibited after its return from Australia, where it had been for some years. I have seen it several times since, but only think it interesting as an illustration of the discussion which it has raised.

In *Punch* for 1859—which, by-the-bye, contains a very interesting record of the Burns Centenary Exhibition at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham in that year—there is a reference to this portrait in a poem describing its contents, written by the late Shirley Brooks:—

"Lay in their niches Burns relics,
Autographs, snuff-boxes, letters,
Hair of the Poet himself,
Hair of his loved Highland Mary,
The portrait of Nasmyth, undoubted,
Likewise the portrait by Taylor,
Which folks have accepted as Robert,
But which I believe to be Gilbert."

On the last page of the pamphlet to which I have alluded there is a very interesting addition, in the shape of an autograph copy, in Dr. John M'Kenzie's own handwriting, of the invitation sent to himself, in June, 1786, by Robert Burns, "as deputy-master brother, to Brother Dr. M'Kenzie, to attend the anniversary of St. John's, at St. James Lodge, Tarbolton," written in rhyme. My father certifies, in a note at the side, that he saw the Doctor copy it in his presence from the original letter of Burns. It was valuable when written, as it had not then been published; but it is now to be found in his poems, as Hogg and Motherwell made it public in 1834 or 1835.

Before closing these reminiscences I would

like to put on record the strong opinion my father always expressed of the unfairness of Lockhart's Life of Burns, inasmuch as he grossly exaggerated his faults, and made many statements about him to his discredit which turned out to be untrue, and many of which he had to retract. In fact, I never heard my father mention the name of the biographer without calling him that "black-guard Lockhart!" At the time I heard this there were, of course, other charges against him, especially his unfounded and scandalous attack on the Ballantynes, both as to their social position and financial honesty, which caused such a bitter discussion in Edinburgh on the appearance of his Life of Scott, and which Robert Chambers always declared Lockhart to be "wholly wrong." In Scott's Diary, just published, there is not a word of blame cast on the Ballantynes, though it covers all the time of their mutual troubles. There is, however, an allusion to Lockhart having a "*wicked wit*," and this was his well-known character. Disraeli, in one of his letters to his sister in 1836, says—"I am to meet Lockhart; he is known in society as 'the viper,' but if he tries to sting me he will find my heel of iron." It is the fashion to overpraise Lockhart's biographies without noticing these drawbacks. In Scott Douglass's last edition of his life of Burns he still points out a good many misstatements of fact. Burns had faults enough, poor man, without having them exaggerated; but Lockhart gives the cue to all that followed in his wake. But this is too large a subject to be treated here. I will close with an interesting incident which I remember happening in 1842, when attending a lecture with my father at the Mechanics' Institution in Liverpool by Charles Cowden Clarke, the well-known friend of Keats, and other literary men of his time. The lecture was on the British poets, one of whom was "Robert Burns," and after

quoting and praising his poetry he began (as is the fashion still with some people) to moralise about him, when my father gave an expressive exclamation of dissent peculiar to himself. Then Cowden Clarke, with his jolly face, looked up amused, as much as to say, "Well, I like that; anything more?" and then went on with the lecture. As I was coming out of the lecture hall, and passing the door of the committee-room, Cowden Clarke came up, and exclaimed to Mr. Hodgson, the secretary (afterwards Professor of Political Economy at Edinburgh University), "I would give anything to know the gentleman who made that exclamation." Seeing me, Mr. Hodgson, who knew my father in Edinburgh, and knew it was him, asked me to find him and bring him in, which I did, and after a good laugh and a chat, Mr. Clarke being interested to hear that my father was not only an admirer of Burns, but had actually seen him, their interview ended in my father inviting Mr. Clarke and Mr. Hodgson to supper, promising Mr. Clarke a glass of whisky toddy out of Burns's wine glass, of which he was the proud possessor! There was a great deal of interesting conversation about Burns and other celebrities, which I, as a young man, greatly enjoyed, especially his singing Canning's song of *The University of Gottingen*. When the Burns glass was produced, of course Cowden Clarke was asked to give a toast. He was a large man, with a large expressive countenance, and as we watched him he set us all in a roar with the comical way in which he simply rolled his eyes round the glass and drank it off in silence! This incident led to many other visits from him, and afterwards we heard that the next time he delivered the same lecture he introduced the story of the interruption from the gentleman who had seen Robert Burns!

XVI.—AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

BY JAMES COGHILL.

"SPIRIT of him whose heart lies here,
Dear Freedom's Heaven-inspired bard,
My soul to thee would fain draw near
To whisper low my heart's regard

For Scotia's peasant-poet son,
Whose songs are sung in every clime—
Wherever valiant deeds are done,
Thy voice shall thunder thro' all time!

"The Warrior on the blood-stained field,
 'Mid raging battle knows no fear—
 While Life is his he scorns to yield,
 For, 'Do or Die' rings in his ear,
 As on that field of far-off yore,
 When they 'who had with Wallace bled,'
 The flower of Edward's army bore
 Before them to their 'gory bed.'

"The Mariner who ploughs the main,
 Steering to foreign lands afar,
 Where man binds with an iron chain
 His slaves, who yet his brethren are,
 In sight of God if not of men,
 Sings oft: All men shall brothers be:
 Ashore he sings it yet again,
 Till slaves believe they *shall* be free.

"The Statesman, high in place and power,
 Knows well the influence of the spell
 Thy song exerts, at every hour,
 Wherever men together dwell:

He sees them firm resolved on right,
 Resolved to down with every wrong—
 He, too, must bow before thy might,
 And own the true worth of thy song.

"And I, to Freedom's cause a friend,
 From stranger land, before it bow:
 Not Scots alone—all true-born men
 Revere the poet of the plough.
 A Scot thou wast by blood and birth,
 But more than Scot in heart and soul—
 For every heart o'er all the earth
 Turns as the needle to the pole.

"To that great brother-heart of thine,
 Which ceased to beat, alas! too soon,
 Thy spirit in thy song doth shine,
 As shines the sun on 'Bonnie Doon,'
 And thro' Eternity *shall* shine
 While brightly shines yon glorious sun—
 For why? Thy spirit is divine,
 And naught divine can be undone!"

XVII.—WHAT SCOTLAND OWES TO BURNS.

A EULOGY. BY WILLIAM MURRAY.

REVEAL, O raptured muse of mine
 What Scotland owes to Burns;
 And tell what we in him shall see
 Until we're in our urns
 To justify the praise we pour
 Upon his name on every shore.
 To count what Scotland owes to Burns
 Transcends poetic powers:
 As easy weigh what we should pay
 For sunshine or for showers,
 Or guess the value of the boon
 The earth possesses in the moon.
 But though we cannot count the half
 Of what we owe our Bard,
 We know enough to write a rough
 Remark or two to guard
 The claim of Robert Burns to all
 The blessings on his name that fall.
 He burst the barriers Baal had built
 Between our cultured classes
 And those whose fate condemned to mate
 With misery—the masses;
 And taught the truth that rolled and ran
 Around the world—"A man's a man."

He showed with peerless pathos how
 Old Scotland's sons of toil
 Revere their God, and make their sod
 A second sacred soil,
 And proved that though they're sometimes
 gnarled,
 They light and lead the working world.
 He demonstrated that our race,
 In spite of Sidney Smith,
 Possessed the wit to splice or split
 A Saxon's sides therewith;
 And by his deathless "Tam o' Shanter"
 Extinguished Sydney at a canter.
 Do not we owe our lyric lord
 Some labour or some love
 For what he did to get us rid
 Of cockney cocks that strove
 To place our glorious ancient tongue
 'Mong languages no longer sung?
 And what, our matchless Sons of Mars,
 Do not ye owe to-day
 To him whose pen gave Scotland's men
 Immortal "Scots wha hae"?
 By which ye conquer when required
 As if by God himself inspired.

Nay, not since Judah's bards and seers
 The songs of Sion sang,
 Has earth or air enjoyed such fare
 As forth from Robin rang
 Through all creation, to remain
 Our everlasting joy and gain.

The tiny tenant of a twig
 This task may ill achieve :
 His trills, tho' true, may but renew
 What other warbles weave ;
 But till our dust to dust returns
 We'll own our debt to Robert Burns.

XVIII.—BURNS AS A READY RHYMER.

BY HON. WILLIAM C. STUROC.

"ROBERT BURNS, the bard of Ayrshire—and the world's verdict or acceptance almost makes him *the* poet of Scotland—was not only exquisitely alive to all forms of true poetical sensation and expression—he not only could take in all the blushing beauty of the modest daisy, and could sympathize with the "wee, sleekit, cow'rin' tim'rous beastie," the mouse, with its "wee bit housie too in ruin," "An' naething left to big a new ane,"—he could not only do all this, but on the loftier side of imagination, he could from his utmost soul exclaim :—

"Oh, Nature ! a' thy shows an' forms,
 To feeling pensive hearts have charms,
 Whether the kindly summer warms
 With life and light,
 Or winter howls in husky storms,
 The live-long night."

Not only could he do all this—gifted soul that he was—but he could descend to the mere common-place badinage of bantering, jingling rhymes, and often displayed in full power the faculty of impromptu rhyming.

The ability to do this, in these, our days, is claimed by the deluded victims of spiritualism as an evidence of aid and interference from the "other side," wherever they may be ; but Robert Burns, who knew as much about that as any so-called "medium," made no such claim. It was with him simply the result of a large development of the convolutions of time, tune and language, cultured by much experience in rhyming, his acute nervous or mental temperament, giving great promptness and vivacity to all his brain impressions and manifestations.

There is no "other side" element in the matter—no miracle, the whole thing is inside of physical brain-matter causes. And there are men and women living to-day who,

possessing the peculiar combination of brain convolution, can rhyme on demand on any given subject. If there were not, of course no pretended "medium" could do it. For all that any deceived or deceiving medium can utter,—so far as the writer has seen or heard—can be readily traced to the brain of the performer. But, to the short story about Burns's ready rhyming :—

In the year 1789, before Burns's reputation as a poet had become generally acknowledged, he and some of his companions were enjoying themselves in a road-side public house, whither, by accident, a person named Andrew Horner, who fancied himself a great poet, having written a great deal, happened to stop on his way to Edinburgh to find a publisher for his verses.

In the course of conversation, being rather overcome by the fumes of the toddy, he explained the reason of his journey "to the great city," when one of the company made a wager with him, that he would find a man in the room who would compose a better verse in a given time than he could. Andrew being rather confident in his muse, took the wager, the time allowed being ten minutes, and commenced :—

"In seventeen hunner eighty-nine,"—

but was not able to get any further when the time expired.

Burns was then called to try his rhyming skill, and with the polite remark that if Mr. Horner was willing, he would borrow the line written. Andrew consented, and Burns, in his rapid round hand, put down the following :—

"In seventeen hunner eighty-nine,
 The deil got stuff to mak some swine,
 An' put it in a corner ;

But afterwards he changed his plan,
An' made it something like a man,
An' ca'd it Andrew Horner."

Horner was so much dispirited at his own
defeat and the wit and ready genius of Burns,

that he threw all his verses into the fire,
swearing he would never write another verse,
but be content to attend to his farm and let
poetry alone for the future."

XIX.—BURNS'S ANNIVERSARY.

Jan. 25, 1864.

BY WILLIAM MURDOCH.

THE Sangs o' Burns, the Sangs o' Burns,
Oh ! wha but loe's those strains, man,
That melt and fire the soul by turns,
And swell the heart and veins, man !
A magic skill, that rules the will,
Pervades their ilka line, man ;
A nameless charm, that nerves the arm,
Or melts at "Auld-lang-syne," man.
Sae, tak' your stan', wi' glass in han',
To pay the tribute due, man ;
A thrilling cheer for ane sae dear
As Burns, the Ayrshire Ploughman.

Though churlish lout his country scout,
To leer its barefoot lasses,
E'en let them spit their cankert wit,
They prove themselves but asses.
The witching wiles and sunny smiles,
And roguish e'en sae blue, man,
That cheer the hames o' Scotland's dames,
Enrapt our manly Ploughman.
Then tak' your stan', etc.

What streams of fire flow from his lyre
When Wallace wight's his theme, man,
O Bannock's banks, where Bruce's ranks
Sealed dear old Scotland's fame, man.

There Saxon loons gat cracket croons,
Which served them lang to claw at,
While Scotland sang till echo rang,
"A man's a man for a' that."
Sae tak' your stan', etc.

"The lingering star" that shines afar
In yonder vault sae blue, man,
Shall record bear through ilka rear,
Of ane whose heart was true, man.
A rapturous flame pervades the frame,
And sparkles in the e'en, man.
Whene'er he strings his harp, and sings
Of Mary, or his Jean, man.
Sae tak' your stan', etc.

The sordid sumph may growl and glumph,
We carena that a flee, man ;
We're kin'ly met and firmly set
To eettle Robin's glee, man.
Let Willie brew the mountain dew,
Let Rab and Allan pree, man,
For ere we gae ilk chiel maun hae
A drappie in his e'e, man.
Sae tak' your stan', etc.

XX.—CAPTAIN GROSE, THE ANTIQUARY.

FROM ECHO.

ON May 12th, 1791, died the once famous
Francis Grose, antiquary, artist and humorist
—a man whose name is unknown, but who
lives in the poetry of his friend Burns, and
in the antiquarian literature of these islands.
He was born in 1731, at Greenford, Middlesex,
and was the son of Francis Grose, a native of
Berne, who came to England in the eighteenth

century, and settled at Richmond, Surrey.
He received a classical education, and he
studied art in Shipley's drawing school. As
early as 1766 he became a member of the
Incorporated Society of British Artists, and
in 1768 he exhibited a drawing, "High Life
Below Stairs." In the next year he exhibited
architectural drawings in the Royal Academy.

About this time Grose held the office of Richmond Herald, and subsequently he was Adjutant and Paymaster of the Hampshire Militia. His system of keeping the regimental accounts was an original one—he put all receipts into one pocket and made all his payments from another—and this soon landed him in confusion and difficulty. He adopted the same system when, in 1778, he was made Adjutant and Captain of the First Surrey or the Tangier Regiment. In his own money matters he was equally careless, and the fortune which his father left him soon vanished.

In 1773 appeared the first volume of the work on which his chief fame rests—"The Antiquities of England and Wales." This was completed in four volumes, in 1787, and still remains a standard work. The drawings were made by himself, but he had assistance in writing the descriptions. This work completed, he visited Scotland, where at Friar's Carse he made the acquaintance of Robert Burns, and the two soon became cronies. Grose was immensely corpulent, as his portrait shows, "full of good humour and good nature and an inimitable boon companion;" and in Burns he found a kindred spirit, who, however, did not scruple to satirise his friend. To Grose the poet addressed the well-known poem which begins—

"Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirke to Johnny Groat's;—
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede you tent it;
A chiel's amang you, takin' notes,
And, taith, he'll prent it!"

The second verse describes the captain's

personal appearance and his skill with the pencil—

"If in your bounds ye chance to light
Upon a fine, fat fodge wight
O' stature short, but genius bright—
That's he; mark weel—
And wow! he has an unco slight
O' cank and keel."

Burns gave serious offence to the worthy antiquary by another poem, "Ken ye ought of Captain Grose?"

In the introduction to the "Antiquities of Scotland" Grose says that Burns made out what was most worthy of notice in Ayrshire, and also wrote specially for him, in connection with Alloway Kirk, "Tam o' Shanter," one of the most popular of the poet's works. (See Burns's General Correspondence. Letter 227).

The "Antiquities of Scotland" (2 vols.) were published in 1789-1791. Then the author visited the sister isle; but alas! his work here was soon cut short. He had not written and printed more than seven pages of his "Antiquities of Ireland," when he died of apoplexy in Dublin. His remains lie in Drumcondra Church.

Besides his chief works Grose was the author of "The Antiquarian Repertory," "Military Antiquities," a "Treatise on Ancient Armour," "Rules for Drawing Caricatures," a "Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue," ("A Dictionary of Buckish Slang, University Wit, and Pickpocket Eloquence,") a "Provincial Glossary," etc.

XXI.—A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT.

BY DR. CHARLES MACKAY.

"A MAN's a man," said Robert Burns,
"For a' that and a' that,"
But though the song be clear and strong,
It lacks a note for a' that.
The lout who'd shirk his daily work,
Yet claim his wage and a' that,
Or beg when he might earn his bread,
Is not a man for a' that.

If all who dine on homely fare,
Were true and brave and a' that,
And none whose garb is "hodden gray,"
Was fool and knave, and a' that,
The vice and crime that shame our time
Would fade and fall, and a' that,
And ploughmen be as good as kings,
And churls as earls for a' that.

You see yon brawny, blustering sot,
 Who swaggers, swears, and a' that,
 And thinks because his strong right arm
 Might fell an ox and a' that,
 That he's as noble, man for man,
 As duke and lord and a' that,
 He's but a brute, beyond dispute,
 And not a man for a' that.

A man may own a large estate
 Have palace, park, and a' that,
 And not for birth, but honest worth,
 Be thrice a man for a' that ;
 And Donald herding on the muir,
 Who beats his wife and a' that,
 Be nothing but a rascal boor,
 Nor half a man for a' that.

It comes to this, dear Brother Burns—
 The truth is old, and a' that—
 "The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
 The man's the gold for a' that ;"
 And though you'd put the minted mark
 On copper, brass, and a' that,
 The lie is gross, the cheat is plain,
 And will not pass for a' that.

For a' that and a' that,
 'Tis soul, and heart, and a' that,
 That makes the king a gentleman,
 And not his crown and a' that :
 And man with man, if rich or poor,
 The best is he, for a' that,
 Who stands erect in self respect,
 And acts the man for a' that.

XXII.—"THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF BRO. ROBERT BURNS."

BY F. FAITHFULL BEGG.

AT the Special Burns's Anniversary Meeting of the Scots Lodge (No. 2,319, England), held at Crane Court, Fleet Street, London, on Thursday, 22nd January, 1891, the Toast of "The Grand Lodge of Scotland, and the Immortal Memory of Bro. Robert Burns," having been proposed by W. Bro. John Whitehead, P.M., Worshipful Master of the Lodge, Bro. F. Faithfull Begg, in reply, after disclaiming any title to speak for the Grand Lodge of Scotland, said :—

Worshipful Master, Wardens and Brethren, it was, I think, a happy inspiration which suggested that the principal meetings of the Scots Lodge in London should be associated with the prominent national anniversaries of our native land ; and of these I know of none more worthy to arrest our attention, or more calculated to cause the fire of our patriotism to burn clear and strong, than the anniversary in special honour of which we are assembled to-night. For it was in this month of January, 132 years ago, that there was born in a lowly cottage in Ayrshire, and of humble parents, a man-child who, by the fire of his genius, kindled anew the perfervid ardour of Scottish national sentiment, and, seizing the banner of patriotism, bore it higher and higher, until at last he planted it securely upon an eminence never previously

reached by even his most gifted predecessors. The subject matter of this toast is well known to most of the brethren present, and while I cannot hope to say anything regarding the poet which has not already been expressed by those who have on former occasions assembled with a similar object, I cherish the hope that I may be able to stir in your minds recollections which may be more or less dormant, and, by reference to facts with which you are all more or less familiar, and the expression of sentiments which you regard as precious, to revive, and, it may be, intensify, those feelings of admiration with which you regard his immortal memory. If, at the same time, I am fortunate enough to convey to the minds of English brethren present, to whom his writings are less familiar, a definite idea of what it is that so strongly appeals to us Scotsmen when we recall the memory of our national bard, I shall consider that my task has been well accomplished.

In recalling the salient features of the life and writings of our national poet, we cannot but be struck, in the first place, by the fact that he forms one among many instances of a higher law, a law which we are unable to account for or to follow in its workings, a law in virtue of which our greatest men spring from the ranks. It is as though the

great Architect of the Universe, out of His mere good pleasure, in order to demonstrate that all our boasted learning and culture form but a mere film or crust—in order to startle us out of our conventionality, and win us from a soul-destroying affectation back to nature and truth—had decreed the sudden apparition from time to time of a Saul among the prophets, a man born of the people, but head and shoulders above his so-called educated contemporaries. Such a man was our national poet, and as such he burst upon the astonished gaze of his countrymen, resplendent as a comet, and destined, unhappily, to an orbit as eccentric.

Of individual incidents in his life, I propose scarcely at all to remind you, not even of those more delightful, because less conventional, passages in the earlier period before he was, to use his own phrase, "dragged forth to the full glare of learned and polite observation." What I prefer to recall, in order to a proper appreciation of the man, are the broad lines of his character, the main-springs and motives which actuated his conduct, and the measure in which his life and writings were influenced and modified by the circumstances of the times in which he lived. And in the composition of such a portrait I assert, without fear of your disapprobation, that the nobler qualities of the man are alone those which should appear prominent, and that only as a background or foil should any use be made of references to the regrettable incidents of his career. Throughout the pages of history we find only too frequently the record of excesses committed by great men. Poets, statesmen, monarchs, warriors, philosophers, nay, even the founders of religions, have been hurried into such. But posterity has agreed that it is not by these that noble characters are to be gauged. To speak of a man's virtues, to conceal his infirmities, and if we can say no good to say no evil of him, is a golden rule of conduct with regard to the living. It is an obligation with respect to the illustrious dead. Canonisation is a process which is necessarily slow. Bit by bit, and generation by generation alone, can the cleansing fire accomplish its loving work, and so in the end the pure gold of the dead man's character be drawn from the crucible.

Of absolutely no man more truly than of our national poet can it be said that he lives in his writings. You may search all literature without finding an instance of one whose life and character, whose every aspiration, hope, fear, joy or sorrow are more accurately limned in his works. Every passion of the human heart, every incident in a painfully-chequered career, you find them each and all forming the subject of his muse, each and all distilled in the alembic of his genius, and crystallised in undying song. And not only do we find this faithful record of the man as he lived, but we can distinguish clearly all the leading influences which went to mould his character and shape his career. Chief among these must be placed his early religious training, a training of the good old Scottish kind, which, however much in his day or since it may, as many think, have erred in the direction of doctrinal subtilty and refinement, had in it the stuff on which great men are reared. Our poet's books were few, but of those to which he had access in his early years he was a diligent student, and we can picture to ourselves with what keen delight he must, for example, have pored over that most magnificent of prose-poems, the Book of Job, or with what force the grand old rugged tramp of the metre of the Psalms of David must have gone home to the heart of the youthful poet. As an appropriate illustration recall the "Cottar's Saturday Night," a picture of the Scottish life of the period among the class to which our poet belonged, so true in its every line that it needs no hall-mark to attest its perfect genuineness. Is it possible that anyone who had not himself come powerfully under the influence of the deep, stern piety of the times could have drawn a portrait of such absolute fidelity? Well might he say,

"From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur
springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered
abroad;
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
An honest man's the noblest work of God."

Time will not admit of detailed reference to minor influences, such, for instance, as the effect upon his imagination of the tales and songs of Betty Davidson, who was remark-

able, as he tells us, for the depth of her "ignorance, credulity and superstition." From her came all the fairy lore and information about warlocks, wraiths, dead-lights, cantraips, and supernatural things in general, which so manifestly stimulated his fancy and developed his poetic vein.

One influence, however, claims our attention in an especial manner this evening, namely, his connection with Freemasonry. I have not been able to satisfy myself as to when he became a member of the craft, but in 1784 he was elected Deputy Master of St. James's Lodge, Tarbolton, a lodge in which he,

" Oft honoured with supreme command,
Presided o'er the sons of light."

In 1786 (after his removal to Mossgiel) he was affiliated to the Kilwinning Lodge, Kilmarnock, and there, that year, he sung, "Ye sons of Aul' Killie." In 1788 he became affiliated to St. Andrew's Lodge, Dumfries. In 1786 we find records of his presence at various Edinburgh Lodges, and it appears to have been at these meetings that he made the acquaintance of many noblemen and gentlemen who afterwards befriended him, notably the Earl of Glencairn, in honour of whom he wrote one of the most beautiful and pathetic of his poems. On a memorable occasion in 1787, at a meeting of the "Scots Lodge," Kilwinning Canongate, now known as St. Andrew (No. 48)—a Lodge a special greeting from which I have had the especial privilege of conveying to you to-night—the whole of the Grand Lodge of Scotland being present, the toast of "Caledonia and Caledonia's Bard, Brother Burns," was given by the Grand Master, received with "multiplied honours and repeated acclamations," and responded to by the poet. His appointment as Laureate of Canongate Kilwinning Lodge is the subject of a painting by Bro. Stewart Watson, well known to Scottish Masons. He held that office during his life, after which it remained in abeyance until its restoration in 1835 in the person of Bro. James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd. Clearly, therefore, the tenets of Freemasonry must have been well known to him, and there is ample evidence in his writings that they were highly esteemed.

Well can we understand that his hand, once given, was a sure pledge of brotherhood; and often and often must he have sought the solace of his own distress by extending relief and consolation to his fellow creatures in the hour of their affliction. If, unfortunately, prudence did not always direct, or temperance chasten, a love of justice was ever the guide of his actions. The very essence of Masonry breathes in the verse:—

" Within this dear mansion may wayward contention,
Or witheréd envy ne'er enter,
May secrecy round be the mystical bound,
And brotherly love be the centre."

No man, we may feel certain, ever entered more heartily into the mysteries of the "fourth degree." Rare nights must have been spent with him when the lodge had passed to refreshment, and we can imagine the genuine gusto with which he wrote:—

" Then fill up a bumper and let it o'erflow,
And honours masonic prepare for to throw,
May every true brother of the compass and square,
Have a big-bellied bottle when harassed with care."

But nothing he has written could more clearly show his intense interest in the craft than the pathetic farewell addressed to his "dear brethren of the mystic tie," the members of St. James's Lodge, when he contemplated "with melting heart and brimful eye," a departure to foreign lands in pursuit of "fortune's sliddery ba'." This is how he addresses them:—

" May freedom, harmony and love
Unite you in the grand design,
Beneath the omniscient Eye above,
The glorious Architect divine!
That you may keep the unerring line,
Still rising by the plummet's law,
Till order bright completely shine,
Shall be my prayer when far awa'."

And again the concluding stanza—sadly appropriate to our present meeting:—

" A last request permit me here
When yearly ye assemble a',
One round, I ask it wi' a tear,
To him, the bard that's far awa'."

No man was ever more entirely human than he. Of no one can it be said more truly that he combined all the frailties of a son of Adam with a genius which was all but divine.

His sympathy for every member of the human race was positively boundless. At the very first glimpse which we get of the man we find him a trusted councillor in all the amorous intrigues of his native village, the repository of the cherished secrets of every love-lorn swain of his acquaintance. Throughout his whole career that which chiefly gives life and vigour to the poems which flowed from his pen is the eagerness with which he rushes to mingle in every occupation, joyous or sorrowful, which engages the attention of his fellows. Nothing comes amiss to him, whether a gospel foray or a drunken revel, a birth, a death, a marriage, a funeral, a lodge meeting, or an anniversary. All alike stimulate his fancy and provoke his muse. So strangely powerful, indeed, to move him, seem individual incidents to have been, as distinguished from the subjects which great writers, whether of prose or verse, have more commonly selected, that we search in vain in his writings for sustained efforts of composition. Nearly all his poems are short, while all are pithy, and to the point. His variety is absolutely infinite. It is immaterial whether he is gibbeting for the delectation of posterity an incarnation of sanctimonious hypocrisy such as, in spite of modern efforts to whitewash him, I take "Holy Willie" to have been, or whether he is reveling in the boisterous jolity of a penny wedding. Nor does the moral ever escape him. Such a character as "Holy Willie" he held in utter scorn. Hear what he says:—

"God knows I'm not the thing I should be,
Nor am I even the thing I could be;
But twenty times I rather would be
An atheist clean,
Than under Gospel colours hid be,
Just for a screen."

Even his longer poems afford ample illustration of the same faculty of spontaneity. Take, as an example, "Tam o' Shanter." It is a poem of the very highest descriptive merit, dramatic to a degree which has rarely been equalled, pervaded throughout with the strongest possible local colour, and from many points a composition which is absolutely unsurpassed. And yet we know it was struck off at a heat, conceived and formed in the poet's brain, and given to the world

just as we see it to-day, in the course of one short afternoon.

I am not here to invent apologies for the absence of self-restraint which led him into those endless difficulties which are ever to be deplored. Particularly in one matter was he extravagantly susceptible. He was utterly unable to resist the fascinations of the fair sex. No one knew that better than himself. You remember where he says:—

"I hae been blythe wi' comrades dear,
I hae been merry drinkin',
I hae been joyful gatherin' gear,
I hae been happy thinkin',
But a' the pleasure e'er I saw,
Though three times doubled fairly,
That happy night was worth them a'
Amang the rigs o' barley."

But even in his relations with the other sex, if he was unhappily unreflecting, he was never deliberately dishonourable. If his "heart was tinder, and eternally lighted up by some goddess," no one ever suffered more keenly from the pangs of remorse. And it must remain everlastingly to his credit that in circumstances which would have led almost any other man to hesitate, when their relative positions had changed completely, when, owing to the action of her family and her own acquiescence, all legal claim upon him had ceased, and when, moreover, his own feelings had entirely altered, he voluntarily made the only reparation in his power to the object of his early affections. Often hurried from the right path by his impulsive nature, no one more fully recognised that to the just and virtuous man death has no terrors equal to the stain of falsehood and dishonour. Hear how he puts it:—

"The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip
To haud the wretch in order;
But where ye feel your honour grip,
Let that be aye your border."

No sketch of his character would be complete without a special reference to his boundless and exalted patriotism. We Scotsmen may claim, I think without fear, that in love of our country we are second to no other nation, either of present or past times. And undoubtedly, of all Scotsmen, none ever lived in whose heart the sacred fire burned more fiercely than in his. For Sir Walter Scott it may be claimed that he did more to strengthen

and perpetuate Scottish national feeling ; and certainly Scott was no less a patriot than our national bard. But I venture unhesitatingly to assert that even Scott never wrote anything which exceeds in concentrated patriotic fervour that masterpiece "Bannockburn," better known as "Scots wha ha'e." Every word, every line, quickens the pulse and makes the blood surge in the veins. You can hear the tramp of the mailed warriors, the clash of the steel, and the shouts of determination "to do or dee." If he had never written another line, this short poem alone would have been amply sufficient to embalm his memory and secure for him a niche among the immortals.

I have thus endeavoured, as far as the time at my disposal would admit, to recall to your memories the leading characteristics of our great national poet. It is intended that it should be a function of this lodge year by year on the anniversary of his birth to

celebrate his immortal memory, and thus to aid in handing down to posterity, alight and glowing, the sacred torch of brotherly kindness and patriotism—a torch which was never more nobly borne than by himself in his lifetime. I esteem it a very high privilege to have been called upon, on this occasion, because, however sensible one may be of inability to rise to the height of so magnificent a theme, it is at least something to have been permitted to respond to a toast dedicated to a memory which remains green in the breast of every true son of Caledonia, to the memory of a man who, if he was an enemy to himself, was pre-eminently the true friend of his country, of a man whose poems find an universal echo in the hearts equally of the highest and of the most humble, and whose mastery over the emotions of his fellows, whether joyous or sorrowful, was as peerless as it was unerring.

XXIII.—ANNIVERSARY STANZAS ON ROBERT BURNS.

BY JOHN MUIR.

Tu duca, tu signore, e tu maestro.—Dante (*Inferno ii.*, 140.)

I.

THE birds that warble in the shade,
The flowers upspringing on the glade ;
The lark that carols high at morn,
The fields which golden grain adorn ;
The gurgling brooks with dreamy sheen
That ripple thro' the moorland green
Have lost, in thy melodious tune,
A friend whose intermittent rune
Has nobly sung their hidden lore
And better yet, he did implore
Mankind to feel their beauty too,
And thus revealed the good and true.

II.

The theme which oft inspired his pen—
That which surpasses human ken—
The difference 'tween rich and poor ;
The visions Syrens who allure
The rapt and holy thoughts of heaven ;
The feeble words of utterance given :
The yearnings for a higher life
Perditioned in the motley strife :

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The cruel arrows shot by those
Who should have been, instead of foes,
His dearest friends whose only aim
Was furtherance of the Poet's claim.
Anon to him my memory turns
And thinking long on Robert Burns
I feel his stimulating power
And warnings in the giddy hour ;
Soothing surcease of my sorrow,
Precepts shaping off the morrow ;
Silver streaks with bright'ning hues
Crystalled o'er with lovely dew ;
Life heroic ; love transfusing ;
Heart and soul thus set a-musing
Glow with philanthropic fervour,
Make me feel that all my devoir
Henceforth and forevermore,
Is my Robin to adore.

III.

Have we ever paused and thought
What a mission Burns has wrought ?
Have we oft, or once, considered

What a message he delivered ?
 If we have our's be the blessing :
 If we have not much we're missing.

IV.

Do I err in thus presuming
 Nearly all the hours consuming
 In the worship of this person ?
 Go and learn this faithful lesson :—
 He who bows him to the earth
 In recognising God-sent worth,

Pays that reverence due th' Eternal,
 Crushes down the spirit infernal ;
 Purifies his mind and feelings,
 Gleaneth Providential dealings.

V.

Fain would I, if 'twere beseeming,
 Using Dante's wider meaning
 Claim for Burns, as Coila's Bard,
 Old Scotia's "leader, teacher, lord."

XXIV.—THE LATEST BURNS DISCOVERIES.

FROM LONDON *BLACK AND WHITE*.

It was in 1791 that Burns entered upon the last and saddest stage of his chequered life. He abandoned farming, and became entirely what he had previously been partially, that "immortal exciseman beyond the Tweed," who consoled Mr. Micawber, and occasionally stimulated him to flights of—quotation. He became a resident in the gossiping scandal-loving, and yet, in its way, important little county town of Dumfries. There, in 1796, the end came, "and Burns passed, not softly, yet speedily, into that still country, where the hail storms and fire showers do not yet reach, and the heaviest-laden wayfarer at length lays down his load." That end was inevitable, perhaps even desirable, for, according to Carlyle, "his life had now lost its unity ; it is a life of fragments ; led with little aim beyond the melancholy one of securing its own continuance—in fits of wild, false joy when such offered, and of black despondency when they passed away." Ever since Carlyle wrote his famous "Essay on Burns," which, all things considered, is still the best deliverance on the most vexed of all literary questions, it has been the accepted view of the poet's career as an exciseman that he was morally and socially on the down grade. Even Mr. Andrew Lang, the latest and not the least generous of his critics, allows, "In his last years perhaps he may have sought to forget his many miseries in an artificial Paradise," although Mr. Lang hastens to say, "His mistake was the common mistake of his period and country ; nothing would have been heard of it had he not been great."

At the same time it may be doubted whether a too pessimistic view of the final period of Burns's life is in accordance either with facts or with the poet's own hopes or even beliefs. A few years ago a discovery was made in connection with Burns's work as an exciseman, and the esteem in which he and it were held by his official superiors, which, although it has not been incorporated in any formal biography of him, tells its own story, and happily one not unfavourable to the poet's character. The private "marks" or "records" made regarding individual excisemen by their superior officers, generally the "supervisors" of their districts, during the time when Burns was on duty, were recovered at Somerset House, whither at some time or other they had been taken from Edinburgh. These were made with a view to the guidance of the excise authorities as to the location—or it might be the dismissal—of their officers. At that time gaugers—as they were popularly known in Scotland—were somewhat noted for their weakness for the bottle, if not for other and even worse vices. Of these, evidence is amply afforded in the records discovered in Somerset House. Such comments as "given to the bottle" are only too frequent. But nothing of the kind is noted of Burns. There are two entries in all opposite his name, which is given simply and formally as "Robert Burns." The one reads, "The Poet—Does well," and was written shortly after he had entered on his career as an exciseman. The other, which appeared later, and shortly before his death,

runs, "The Poet—Does pretty well." It may be inferred from the difference for the worse between "well" and "pretty well" that the poet had, in the opinion of the excise detectives been deteriorating in character. Had this been the case, however, there is every reason to believe it would have been mercilessly recorded against him. Besides, two other and more reasonable explanations of "pretty well" are forthcoming. During Burns's residence in Dumfries, politics ran high, owing to the French Revolution. It had its sympathizers and opponents in Dumfries, as it had its sympathizers in London like Fox, and its opponents, like Burke. Burns, ignoring, or—which is much more probable—ignorant of the fact that, as a public servant, he had no right to take a side in politics, espoused the side of the Revolution. In a short time he was in the black-books of his superiors in consequence. Then Burns had at one time a small dispute with his "supervisor" about some of the details of his work, and in particular about a certain "wine account." It may have been while he was under the one or the other of these clouds that the "pretty well" was marked against his name.

But it has been placed beyond question that these clouds passed away. Mr. Findlater, this same "supervisor," testified in the most emphatic manner after Burns's death to the business assiduity of his colleague. Nay, more, when Mr. Findlater himself felt ill, Burns was appointed his *locums tenens*, and discharged his duties with such fidelity that he had to cease literary work for a time. Finally, it is demonstrated by several important letters of Burns which have at different times been published, that Burns contemplated—and had good reason to contemplate—his promotion, first, to a supervisorship, and then to a collectorship, which latter post would have given him a good income, and leisure for what Carlyle terms "clear poetical activity." It is also on record that the best of Burns's friends, who looked coldly on him while he was under a cloud, returned to him during the last two years of his life, including

Mrs. Riddell, whom he had lampooned; that his widow indignantly denied that her husband ever came home of an evening—or a morning—from any social entertainment hopelessly intoxicated, and that he died, not of drink, but of rheumatism, as many a good man has died during these last three years of influenza or pneumonia. There is a legend, indeed, that Burns's death was hastened by his coming out of the famous Globe Inn of a winter morning, sitting down on the street pavement, and (overcome with liquor) falling asleep in the snow. This has been discredited of late, and, as there is absolutely no evidence but gossip in favour of its truth, it need not be seriously entertained.

During these later years Burns's relations with women, which used to be so mysterious, have been cleared up in a tolerably satisfactory manner. When a farmer in Ayrshire, he fell in love with Jean Armour, whom he terms the "jewel" of "the Belles of Mauchline." As she loved him not wisely but too well, he offered her marriage, and, in the opinion of Scotch lawyers, actually contracted a marriage. But Jean, influenced by her parents, threw him over. Believing himself a free man, he became betrothed to "Highland Mary," or Mary Campbell, and they would have been married had not Mary died of a fever within four months after betrothal. Burns next proposed to Miss Margaret or "Peggy" Chalmers, a young woman of strong judgment and substantial social position. Being already engaged, she declined to entertain Burns's suit. Then came Burns's friendship with "Clarinda," otherwise Mrs. Agnes Maclehose, a fascinating and sprightly grass-widow of the same age as himself, living in Edinburgh and separated from a worthless husband resident in Jamaica. Mrs. Maclehose wished, after divorcing her husband, to marry Burns. He would have fallen in with this plan, had not he considered himself morally less bound to her than to the mother of his children. He cut the Gordian knot of his difficulties by marrying Jean Armour a second time and publicly. Thus ended—it is now demonstrated—the Odyssey of his amorous wanderings.

XXV.—BURNS.

From "Love Idylls, Ballads, and other Poems," by HENRY DRYERRE, Blairgowrie.

THIS once forgive, O Bardic Shade,
Th' approach of one whose hand is made
For other work than polished lays
Of thoughtless flattery or praise.
Thy name, dear Burns, is in each heart,
And in our daily life takes part ;
It breathes around like common air,
And all are nourished by its care ;
Thy words, a ploughman thou of thought,
With such potential spirit fraught,
Have turned the soil of human hearts,
Till from each furrow daily starts
Such wealth of harvesting and flowers,
For winter dearth and summer hours,
That men, amazéd, grateful, sigh,
To find what treasures in them lie.
Where'er we roam o'er Scotia dear
Thy genius and thy love appear :
The stars speak of thy tender love,
And earth doth answer heaven above ;
Each fragrant flower, each waving tree,
Each heath-clad hill and verdant lea ;
The wimpling burn and placid lake,
The warbling birds in bush and brake ;
The forms of nature loved by all,
Thy name aloud, emphatic, call !
New beauties spring where thou did'st tread,
And all is blossom erstwhile dead ;
New meanings from things common start,
And finer feelings in each heart.
When tear-stained face and trembling tongue,
Betray the heart with anguish wrung ;
When lovers meet in lonely dell,
The oft-told tale of love to tell ;
When brother Scots, where'er the land,
Stand face to face, firm hand in hand,
Or in the hell of sulphurous strife,
In fence of country and of life,
With knitted brow and flashing steel
Strike for their home and country's weal,—
Thy thoughts, potential, light each face,
And words superfluous give them place :
To tragic war, as peaceful arts,
Thy genius fire and grace imparts—
While Scots are brave, are true, are free,
As soon forget their land as thee !

Yet, poet thou for every clime,
For every race, and for all time,

Should'st thou, who lived and sang thy day
When few attended to thy lay,
On this poor earth one thought bestow ;
And care, perchance, for aught below,—
Methinks, while men relieve their mind
For deeds unjust and thoughts unkind
Which thou did'st suffer here on earth—
A man of tears, yet child of mirth—
Laudate anew thine honoured name,
And to thy credit place thy frame—
Methinks around those lips there may
A gentle smile of scorning play.
A poet thou, and care to claim
The credit of a poet's frame ?
Possessor thou of mines unwrought,
Creator of domains of thought,
Dispensing with a kingly hand
The heavenly gifts at thy command ;
And yet—and yet—one moment care,
Yea, for a single heart-throb dare,
To claim the virtue of that place
Which thou did'st fill by Heaven's own grace ?

No, no, dear Burns, forgive the thought,
'Twas thrust upon us all unsought ;
To such as thee, the kings of song,
To whom all earth and heaven belong,
There is no gift that mankind give
So sweet as simple leave to live ;
To be as thou wast as a voice
Which uttereth but another's choice—
Behind, unseen, unfelt by all,
Save he who hath the poet's call.
For there is certainly a soul
'That doth the poet's soul control ;
He singeth at his own sweet will,
Subservient to a deeper still ;
The earth, the heavens, he grasps with might,
He readeth all men's thoughts aright ;
Within the garden of his heart
The blossoms of the future start,
And men who gather ripened fruit
Forget the poet was the root :—
Yet doth a still and secret hand
The poet's issues all command,
And all the thinkings of his heart
From depths unknown, unsounded, start ;
Creator he, unwilling, unsought,
Created he, unknown, a thought.

Thou, Burns, thine own behests didst seek—
 'Twas mortal that thou shouldst be weak ;
 Yet, as we view thee, crowned with song,
 What sympathies around thee throng !

The imperfections of our earth
 Have faded at death's second birth :
 Pedestalled on all time thou art,
 True prophet of the human heart !

XXVI.—ROBERT BURNS.

An Address delivered by GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS at the Unveiling of the Burns Statue in Central Park, New York, on Saturday, October 2nd, 1880.

THE year 1759 was a proud year for Great Britain. Two years before, amid universal disaster, Lord Chesterfield had exclaimed, "We are no longer a nation!" But meanwhile Lord Chatham had restored to his country, the sceptre of the seas, and covered her name with glory of continuous victory. The year 1759 saw his greatest triumphs. It was the year of Minden, where the French army were routed ; of Quiberon, where the French fleet was destroyed ; of the heights of Abraham in Canada, where Wolfe died happy, and the dream of French supremacy upon the American continent vanished for ever. The triumphant thunder of British guns was heard all around the world. Robert Clive was founding British dominion in India ; Boscawen and his fellow-admirals were sweeping France from the ocean ; and in America Col. George Washington had planted the British flag on the field of Braddock's defeat. "We are forced to ask every morning what victory there is," said Horace Walpole, "for fear of missing one !"

But not only in politics and war was the genius of Great Britain illustrious, James Watt was testing the force of steam ; Hargreaves was inventing the spinning-jenny, which ten years later Arkwright would complete ; and Wedgwood was making household ware beautiful ; Fielding's *Tom Jones* had been ten years in print, and Gray's *Elegy* nine years ; Dr. Johnson had lately published his dictionary ; and Edmund Burke his essay on the *Sublime and Beautiful*. In the year 1759 Garrick was the first of actors, and Sir Joshua Reynolds of painters ; Gibbon dated in this year the preface of his first work ; Hume published the third and fourth volumes of his *History of England* ; Robertson his

History of Scotland ; and Sterne came to London to find a publisher for *Tristram Shandy* ; Oliver Goldsmith, "unfriended, solitary," was toiling for the booksellers in his garret over Fleet ditch, but four years later, with Burke and Reynolds and Garrick and Johnson, he would found the most famous of literary clubs and sell the *Vicar of Wakefield* to save himself from jail. It was a year of events decisive of the course of history, and of men whose fame is an illustrious national possession. But among those events none is more memorable than the birth of a son in the poorest of Scotch homes—and of all that renowned and resplendent throng of statesmen, soldiers, and seamen, of philosophers, poets, and inventors, whose fame filled the world with acclamation, not one is more gratefully and fondly remembered than the Ayrshire ploughman, Robert Burns.

This great assembly is, in large part, composed of his countrymen. You, fellow-citizens, were mostly born in Scotland. There is no more beautiful country,—and, as you stand here, memory and imagination recall your native land. Misty coasts and far-stretching splendours of the summer sea, solemn mountains and wind-swept moors, singing-streams and rocky glens and waterfalls, lovely vales of Ayr and Yarrow, of Teviot and the Tweed, crumbling ruins of ancient days, abbey and castle and tower, legends of romance gliding burn and brae with "the light that never was on sea or land," every hill, with its heroic tradition, every stream with its story, every valley with its song, land of the harebell and the mountain daisy, land of the laverock and the curlew, land of braw youths and sonsie lassies, of a

deep, strong, melancholy manhood, of a deep, true, tender womanhood—this is your Scotland, this is your native land. And how could you so truly transport it to the home of your adoption, how interpret to us beyond the sea, so fully and so fitly, as by this memorial of the poet, whose is Scotland? No wonder that you proudly bring his statue and place it here under the American sun, in the chief American city, side by side, with that of the other great Scotchman, whose genius and fame, like the air and the sunshine, no local boundary can confine. In this Walhalla of our various nationality it will be long before two fellow-country-men are commemorated whose genius is at once so characteristically national, and so broadly universal, who speak so truly for their own countrymen and for all mankind as Walter Scott and Robert Burns.

The season of the reddening leaf, of sunny stillness and of roaring storm, especially befits this commemoration, because it was at this season that the poet was peculiarly inspired, and because the wild and tender, the wayward and golden-hearted autumn is the best symbol of his genius. The sculptor has imagined him in some hour of pensive and ennobling meditation, when his soul, amid the hush of evening, in the falling year, was exalted to an ecstasy of passionate yearning and regret, and here, rapt into silence, just as the heavenly melody is murmuring from his lips, here he sits, and will sit, for ever. It was in October that Highland Mary died; it was in October that the hymn to Mary in Heaven was written; it was in October, ever afterward, that Burns was lost in melancholy musing as the anniversary of her death drew near,—yet within a few days, while his soul might seem to have been still lifted in that sorrowful prayer, he wrote the most rollicking, resistless, and immortal of drinking songs:

“O Willie brew’d a peck o’ maut,
And Rab and Allan cam’ to pree,
Three blither hearts that lee lang night
Ye wadna find in Christendie.”

Here were the two strains of this marvellous genius, and the voices of the two spirits that went with him through life:

“He raised a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.”

This was Burns. This was the blended poet and man. What sweetness and grace! What soft pathetic penetrating melody, as if all the sadness of shaggy Scotland had found a voice! What whispering witchery of love! What boisterous, jovial humour, excessive, daring, unbridled!—satire of the kirk, so scorching and scornful that John Knox might have burst indignant from his grave, and shuddering ghosts of Covenanters have filled the mountains with a melancholy wail. A genius so masterful, a charm so universal, that it drew farmers from the field when his coming was known, and men from their tavern beds at midnight to listen delighted until dawn.

It cannot be said of Burns that he “burst his birth’s invidious bar.” He was born poor, he lived poor, he died poor, and he always felt his poverty to be a curse. He was fully conscious of himself, and of his intellectual superiority. He disdained and resented the condescension of the great, and he defiantly asserted his independence. I do not say that he might not, or ought not, to have lived tranquilly and happily as a poor man. Perhaps, as Carlyle suggests, he should have divided his hours between poetry and virtuous industry. We only know that he did not. Like an untameable eagle he dashed against the bars he could not break, and his life was a restless, alternation of low and lofty moods, of pure and exalted feeling, of mad revel and of impotent regret. His pious mother crooned over his cradle snatches of old ballads and legends of which her mind was full. His father, silent, austere, inflexibly honest, taught him to read good books, books whose presence in his poor cottage helps to explain the sturdy mental vigour of the Scotch peasantry. But the ballads charmed the boy. He could not turn a tune, but, driving the cart, or ploughing or digging in the field, he was still saying the verses over and over, his heart answering, like a shell the sea, until he was fifteen he composed a song himself upon a lassie who drew his eye and heart; and so, as he says, love and poetry began with him together.

For ten years his life was a tale of fermenting youth; toiling and moiling, turning this way and that, to surveying, and flax-dressing, in the vain hope of find a fairer chance; a

lover of all girls, and the master of the revels everywhere; brightened the long day of peat-cutting with the rattling fire of wit that his comrades never forgot; writing love-songs, and fascinated by the wild smuggler boys of Kirkoswald; led by them into bitter shame and self-reproach, but turning, with all the truculence of heady youth, upon his moral censors, and taunting them with immortal ridicule. At twenty-five, when his father was already laid in Alloway kirkyard, the seed of old national legend which his mother had dropped into his cradle began to shoot into patriotic feeling and verse, and Burns became conscious of distinct poetic ambition. For two years he followed the plough, and wrote some of his noblest poems. But the farm which he tilled with his brother was unproductive, and at the very time that his genius was most affluent his conduct was most wayward.

Distracted by poetry and poverty, and passion, and brought to public shame, he determined to leave the country, and in 1786, when he was twenty-seven years old, Burns published his poems by subscription to get the money to pay his passage to America. Ah! could that poor, desperate ploughman of Mossgiel have foreseen this day, could he have known that because of those poems, an abiding part of literature, familiar to every people, sung and repeated in American homes from sea to sea, his genius would be honoured and his name blessed, and his statues raised with grateful pride to keep his memory in America green for ever, perhaps the amazing vision might have nerved him to make his life as noble as his genius, perhaps the full sunshine of assured glory might have wrought upon that great, generous, wilful soul to—

“Tak’ a thought an’ men’.”

Burns’s sudden fame stayed him, and brought him to Edinburgh and its brilliant literary society. Hume was gone, but Adam Smith remained; Robertson was there, and Dugald Stewart. There, also, were Blacklock and Hugh Blair and Alison; Fraser Tytler and Adam Ferguson and Henry Erskine. There, too, were the beautiful Duchess of Gordon, and the truly noble Lord Glencairn. They welcomed Burns as a prodigy,

but he would not be patronized. Glad of his fame, but proudly and aggressively independent, he wanders through the stately city, taking off his hat before the house of Allan Ramsay, and reverently kissing Robert Ferguson’s grave, “his elder brother in misfortune,” as Burns called him. He goes to the great houses, and although they did not know it, he was the greatest guest they had ever entertained, the greatest poet that then or ever walked the streets of Edinburgh. His famous hosts were all Scotchmen, but he was the only Scotchman among them who had written in the dialect of his country, and who had become famous without ceasing to be Scotch. But one day there stole into the drawing-room where Burns stood a boy of fifteen, who was presently to eclipse all Scottish fame but that of Burns himself. The poet was looking at an engraving of a soldier lying frozen in the snow, under which were some touching lines, and, as he read them, Burns, with his eyes full of tears, asked who wrote them. None of the distinguished company could tell him; but the young boy, Walter Scott, timidly whispered the name of the author, and he never forgot that Burns turned upon him his full dark, tearful eyes—eyes which Scott called the most glorious imaginable—and thanked him. Scott never saw Burns again. They meet here now, in this Central Park, for the first time since then.

The dazzling Edinburgh days were a glaring social contrast to the rest of his life. The brilliant society flattered him, but his brilliancy outshone its own. He was wiser than the learned, wittier than the gayest, and more courteous than the courtliest. His genius flashed and blazed like a torch among the tapers, and the well-ordered company, enthralled by the surprising guest, winced and wondered. If the host was condescending, the guest was never obsequious. But Burns did not love a lord, and he chafed indignantly at the subtle but invincible lines of social distinction, feeling too surely that the realm of leisure and ease, a sphere in which he knew himself to be naturally master, must almost float beyond, beyond—the alluring glimmer of a mirage. A thousand times wistfully watching the fascinating human

figure amid the sharp vicissitudes of his life, from Poosie Nansie's ale-house in Mauchline to the stately drawing-room of Gordon Castle, with all his royal manhood and magnificent capability entangled and confused, the heart longs, but longs in vain, to hear the one exulting and triumphant cry of the strong man coming to himself, "I will arise."

But with all his gifts, that was not given him. Burns left Edinburgh to wander about his bonnie Scotland, his mind full of its historic tradition and legendary lore, and beginning to overflow with songs born of the national melodies. He was to see, and he wished to see, no other land. His heart beat toward it with affectionate fidelity, as if he felt that somehow its destiny were reflected in his own. At Coldstream, where the Tweed divides Scotland from England, he went across the river, but, as he touched the English soil, he turned, fell upon his knees, stretched out his arms to Scotland, and prayed God to bless his native land.

His wanderings ended. Burns settled at twenty-nine upon the pleasant farm of Ellisland, in Nithsdale, over the hills from his native Ayrshire,

"To make a happy fireside clime
For weans and wife."

Here his life began happily. He managed the farm, started a parish library, went to church, and was proud of the regard of his neighbours. He was honoured and sought by travellers, and his genius was in perfect tune. *Tam O'Shanter*, and *Bonnie Doon*, the songs of *Highland Mary*, *John Anderson, my Joe*, and *Auld Lang Syne*, are all flowers of Ellisland. But he could not be farmer, guager, poet and prince of good fellows at once. The cloud darkened that was never to be lifted. The pleasant farm at Ellisland failed, and Burns, selling all his stock and crop and tools, withdrew to Dumfries. It was the last change of his life, and melancholy were the days that followed, but radiant with the keen flashes and tender gleams of the highest poetic genius of the time. Writing exquisite songs, often lost in the unworthiest companionship, consumed with self-reproach, but regular in his official duties; teaching his son to love the great English poets from Shakespeare to Gray, seeking pleasure at any

cost, conscious of a pity and a censure at which he could not wonder, but conscious also of the inexpressible tragedy which pity and censure could not know nor comprehend, and through evil report and good report the same commanding and noble nature that we know, Burns, in these dark days of Dumfries, is like a stately ship in a tempest with all her canvas spread, with far-flying streamers and glancing lights and music penetrating the storm, drifting helpless on the cruel rocks of a lee shore. One summer evening toward the end, as a young man rode into Dumfries to attend a ball, he saw Burns loitering alone on one side of the street, while the other was thronged with gay gentlemen and ladies, not one of whom cared to greet the poet. The young man instantly dismounted, and joining Burns, asked him to cross the street. "Nay, nay, my young friend, that's all over now;" and then, in a low, soft, mournful voice Burns repeated the old ballad:

"His bonnet stood ance fu' fair on his broo,
His auld ane looked better than mony ane's new,
But now he lets't wear ony way it will hing,
And casts himself dowie upon the corn-bing."

O were we young as we ance hae been,
We suld hae been galloping down on yon green,
And linking it owre the lily white lee,
And werena my heart light I wad dee."

Five years of letting his life "wear ony way it would hing," and Burns's life was ended in 1796, in his thirty-seventh year. There was an outburst of universal sorrow. A great multitude crowded the little town at his burial. Memorials, monuments, biographies of every kind followed. Poets ever since have sung of him as of no other poet. The theme is always fresh and always captivating, and within the year our own American poet, beloved and honoured in his beautiful and unwasted age, sings of Burns as he sees him in vision, as the world shall for ever see him, an immortal youth cheerily singing at his toil in the bright spring morning.

The personal feeling of Longfellow's poem is that which Burns always inspires. There is no great poet who is less of a mere name and abstraction. His grasp is so human that the heart insists upon knowing the story of his life, and ponders it with endless sympathy and wonder. It is not necessary to excuse

or conceal. The key of Burns's life is the struggle of a shrinking will tossed between great extremes, between poetic genius and sensibility, intellectual force, tenderness, consciousness, and generous sympathies on one side, and tremendous passions upon the other. We cannot, indeed, know the power of the temptation. We cannot pretend to determine the limits of responsibility for infirmity of will. We only know that however supreme and resistless the genius of a man may be it does not absolve him from the moral obligation that binds us all. It would not have comforted Jeannie Deans as she held the sorrowing Effie to her heart to know that the "fause lover" who "staw" her rose was named Shakespeare or Burns. Nor is there any baser prostitution than that which would grace self-indulgence with an immortal name. If a boy is a dunce at school it is a foolish parent who consoles himself with remembering that Walter Scott was a dull school-boy. It was not Scott's dullness that made him the magician. It is not the revelling at Poosie Nansie's and the Globe Tavern, and the reckless life at Mauchline and Mossgiel, that endeared Robert Burns to mankind. Just there is the mournful tragedy of his story. Just there lies its pathetic appeal. The young man who would gild his dissipation with the celestial glamour of Burns's name snatches the glory of a star to light him to destruction. But it is no less true, and in the deepest and fullest meaning of his own words,

"What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted."

"Except for grace," said Bunyan, "I should have been yonder sinner." "Granted," says Burns's brother man and brother Scot, Thomas Carlyle, in the noblest plea that one man of genius ever made for another, "Granted the ship comes into harbour with shroud and tackle damaged, and the pilot is therefore blameworthy, for he has been all-wise and all-powerful, but to know he is blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the Globe or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs."

But we unveil to-day, and set here for perpetual contemplation, not the monument of the citizen at whom respectable Dumfries

looked askance, but the statue of a great poet. Once more we recognize that no gift is more divine than his, that no influence is more profound, that no human being is a truer benefactor of his kind. The spiritual power of poetry, indeed, like that of natural beauty, is immeasurable, and it is not easy to define and describe Burns's service to the world. But, without critical and careful detail of observation, it is plain, first of all, that he interpreted Scotland as no other country has been revealed by a kindred genius. Were Scotland suddenly submerged, and her people swept away, the tale of her politics and kings and great events would survive in histories. But essential Scotland, the customs, legends, superstitions, language; the grotesque humour, the keen sagacity, the simple serious faith, the characteristic spirit of the national life caught up and preserved in the sympathy of poetic genius, would live forever in the poet's verse. The sun of Scotland sparkles in it; the birds of Scotland sing; its breezes rustle; its waters murmur. Each "timorous wee beastie," the "ourie cattle," and the "silly sheep" are softly penned and gathered in this all-embracing fold of song. Over the dauntless battle hymn of *Scot's wha hae wi' Wallace bled*, rises the solemn music of the *Cottar's Saturday Night*. Through the weird witch romance of *Tam O'Shanter* breathes the scent of the wild rose of Alloway, and the daring and astounding Babel of the *Jolly Beggars* is penetrated by the heart-breaking sigh to Jessie:—

"Although thou maun never be mine,
Although even hope is denied,
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing
Than aught in the world beside."

The poet touches every scene and sound, every thought and feeling, but the refrain of all is Scotland. To what other man was it ever given so to transfigure the country of his birth and love. Every bird and flower, every hill and dale and river, whisper and repeat his name, and the word Scotland is sweeter because of Robert Burns.

But in thus casting a poetic spell upon everything distinctively Scotch, Burns fostered a patriotism which has become proverbial. The latest historian of England says that at the time of Burns's birth England was mad

with hatred of the Scots. But when Burns died there was not a Scotchman who was not proud of being a Scotchman. A Scotch ploughman singing of his fellow-peasants, and their lives and loves in their own language, had given them in their own eyes a dignity they had never known :

“ A man’s a man for a’ that.”

And America is trying to make the ploughman’s words true. Great poets before and after Burns have been honoured by their countries and by the world ; but is there any great poet of any time or country who has so taken the heart of what our Abraham Lincoln, himself one of them, called the plain people, that, as was lately seen in Edinburgh, when he had been dead nearly a hundred years, workmen going home from work begged to look upon this statue for the love and honour they bore to Robert Burns ? They love him for their land’s sake, and they are better Scotchmen because of him. England does not love Shakespeare, nor Italy Dante, nor Germany Goethe, with the passionate ardour with which Scotland loves Burns. It is no wonder, for here is Auld Scotia’s thistle bloomed out into a flower so fair that its beauty and perfume fill the world with joy.

But the power thus to depict national life and character, and thus to kindle an imperishable patriotism, cannot be limited by any nationality or country. In setting words to Scotch melodies Burns turns to music the emotions common to humanity, and so he passes from the exclusive love of Scotland into the reverence of the world. Burns died at the same age with Raphael ; and Mozart who was his contemporary, died only four years before him. Raphael and Mozart are the two men of lyrical genius in kindred arts who impress us as most exquisitely refined by careful cultivation ; and although Burns was of all great poets the most unschooled, he belongs in poetry with Raphael in painting, and Mozart in music, and there is no fourth. An indescribable richness and flower-like quality, a melodious grace and completeness and delicacy, belong to them all. Looking upon a beautiful human Madonna of Raphael, we seem to hear the rippling cadence of Mozart, and the tender and true song of

Burns. They are all voices of the whole world speaking in the accent of a native land. Here are Italy and Germany and Scotland, distinct, individual, perfectly recognizable, but the sun that reveals and illuminates their separate charm, that is not Italian, or German, or Scotch, it is the sun of universal nature. This is the singer whom this statue commemorates, the singer of songs as immortal as love, pure as the dew of the morning, and sweet as its breath ; songs with which the lover wooes his bride and the mother soothes her child, and the heart of a people beat with patriotic exultation ; songs that cheer human endeavour and console human sorrow and exalt human life. We cannot find out the secret of their power. Until we know why the rose is sweet, or the dewdrop pure, or the rainbow beautiful, we cannot know why the poet is the best benefactor of humanity. Whether because he reveals us to ourselves, or because he touches the soul with the fervour of divine aspiration, whether because in a world of sordid and restless anxiety he fills us with serene joy, or puts into rhythmic and permanent form the best thoughts and hopes of man—who shall say ? But none the less is the heart’s instinctive loyalty to the poet the proof of its consciousness that he does all these things, that he is the harmonizer, strengthener, and consoler. How the faith of Christendom has been staid for centuries upon the mighty words of the old Hebrew bards and prophets, and how the vast and inexpressible mystery of divine love and power and purpose has been best breathed in parable and poem ! If we were forced to surrender every expression of human genius but one, surely we should retain poetry ; and if we were called to lose from the vast accumulation of literature all but a score of books, among that choice and perfect remainder would be the songs of Burns.

How fitly, then, among the memorials of great men, of those who in different countries and times and ways have been leaders of mankind, we raise this statue of the poet whose genius is an unconscious but sweet and elevating influence in our national life. It is not a power dramatic, obvious, imposing, immediate, like that of the statesman, the warrior, and the inventor, but it is as deep

and strong and abiding. The soldier fights for his native land, but the poet touches that land with the charm that makes it worth fighting for, and fires the warrior's heart with the fierce energy that makes his blow invincible. The statesman enlarges and orders liberty in the State, but the poet fosters the love of liberty in the heart of the citizen. The inventor multiplies the facilities of life, but the poet makes life better worth living. Here, then, among trees, flowers and waters; here upon the green sward, and under the open sky; here where birds carol, and children play, and lovers whisper, and the various stream of human life flows by—we raise the statue of Robert Burns. While the human heart beats that name will be music in human life. We know better than he the infinite pathos of his own. Ah!

Robert Burns, Robert Burns, whoever lingers here as he passes and muses upon your statue will see in imagination a solitary mountain in your own beautiful Scotland, heaven soaring, wrapped in impenetrable clouds. Suddenly the mists part and there are the heather, the brier-rose, and the gowan fine, there are the

“Burnies, wimplin’ down your glens
Wi’ toddlin’ din,
Or foaming strang wi’ hasty stens,
Frae linn to linn.”

the cushat is moaning; the curlew is calling; the plover is singing; the red deer is bounding; and look! the clouds roll utterly away and the clear summit is touched with the tender glory of sunshine, heaven's own benediction.

XXVII.—ROBERT BURNS.

BY ALEXANDER M'LACHLAN.

The Caledonian Society, of Toronto, some few years ago, offered a Gold Medal for the best poem on Burns. There were thirty-seven pieces handed in, and the following was awarded the medal:

HAIL to the bard; wha did belang
To nae mere class or clan;
But did maintain and not in vain;
The Britherhood o' Man;
The King o' Hearts! wha did far mair
To knit us to ilk ither
Than oor lang line (some ca't divine)
O' Kings a' put thegither.

An' what although he may be puir,
On Richt he takes his stand,
An' bears him wi' the very air
O' oor ain mountain land;
His mission is wi' wrang to cope
An' bid it to depart—
Anew to kindle love an' hope
In the despairing heart.

Frae what plain common sense ca's richt
Nae sophistry can win him
An' daurs to speak wi' a' his micht
The burning thochts within him;
His sense o' richt, his sense o' wrang,
His love o' humble worth,
He poured in an immortal sang,
That' ringing roun' the earth:

For intellectually sublime,
This humble peasant saw, that
Despite distinctions here, in time
“A man's a man for a' that,”
And if there was a man on earth
Wha had his detestation,
'Twas he wha' measured men by birth,
An' worshipped rank an' station:

For after honours he wad sneak,
An' he'd defend the wrang,
An' he wad trample on the weak,
An' truckle to the strang;
Stick ribbons in his button hole,
An' gartens at his knee,
An' his bit trifle o' a' soul
Gang perfectly a-gley.

But still despite o' a' the wrang
That comes by human blindness,
The spirit o' the peasant sang
Is pity, love, an' kindness;
He pities e'en the warst of folk,
For even some o' them
Wi' a' their flaws he fin's mair cause
To pity than condemn:

An' for the outcast everywhere,
 He had a heart to feel
 An' had some sympathy to spare,
 E'en for the very Deil.
 Tho' in the grasp of poverty
 Wi' a' its wants an' fears,
 His heart o'erflows for ither's woes
 As 'twere a fount o' tears.

E'en when he sees a needless pang
 Gien to the brute creation,
 He wha inflict'st maun bide the stang
 O' his roused indignation;
 The thochtless youth cannot escape
 Who wounds the harmless "Hare,"
 For mercy in the peasant's shape
 Stands forth protesting there.

His sangs hae something in their soun'
 That fills the heart an' e'e;
 "Ye banks an' braes o' bonnie Doon,"
 Are magic words to me.
 O Doon! thou'st like nae ither stream
 Love's sacred spell has bound thee,
 For a' the glory o' a dream,
 The peasant threw around thee:

Thou sped unknown, through ages long
 A little nameless river;
 Till pity poured love's tear in sang,
 An' hallowed thee for ever:
 Lang as the human heart remains
 A fount o' hopes an' fears,
 This simple little strain o' strains
 Shall stir it into tears:

For by the Poet's magic art,
 Tho' but a moorland river,
 Through the green regions o' the heart,
 Roll on it shall forever,
 Wi' him the birds forever sing;
 The gowans ne'er depart;
 He carries a supernal spring
 Forever in his heart:

The "modest flower" he crushed to earth
 Wi' a' its snawy blossoms,
 By him transplanted blooms henceforth
 For ever in our bosoms;
 An' a' the streams may cease to flow;
 The sun itsel' may vary;
 But down the ages he shall go
 Wi' his dear Highland Mary.

Anon the bard doth change his mood,
 And in the mirthfu' vein,
 What fancies flit on mother-wit,
 An' humour a' his ain:
 Until his mirth-provoking strains,
 Set daddie care a daffin'
 An' pit sic fun in his auld veins
 He canna flyte for laughin':

Despite the thunder's dreadfu' soun',
 A' through the air sae mirk,
 'Mang deils an' witches he's sat down
 In Alloway's auld kirk;
 He hears auld Nick play up a spring,
 Amang his crew uncanny;
 See a' the deevils dance and fling,
 An' cross an' cleck wr' Nannie.

Hears, Tammie, as his senses swim,
 Roar "Well dune Cutty Sark,"
 An' hears the hellish legion grim
 Rush on him in the dark,
 An' lang across the brig o' time,
 That region weird and scraggy,
 Shall chase triumphant Tam sublime
 On his immortal Maggie!

An' lo! aneath the cloud o' nicht,
 Despite misfortune's deggers,
 Saw mortal ever sic a sicht?
 As a' they "Jolly beggars,"
 E'en happiness that shuns the great
 Can nestle amang rags,
 And even love and joy can wait
 Amang auld mealy bags.

E'en wisdom, gravely listens when
 His "Twa Dugs" tak' a seat;
 To get some licht on ways o' men,
 But even dugs are beat.
 Burns wasna perfect to a dot,
 An' wha amang us a'
 But has some hole in his ain coat,
 An' maybe some hae twa.

Let them tak tent wha think they staun,
 God keep us humble a'!
 The pride o' never having fa'en
 Itsel's a dreadfu' fa'.
 O never, never! forward be
 The erring ane to blame,
 For under like temptation ye
 Micht just hae dune the same.

Burns nicht hae muckle to repent
 Frae "passion wild and strong";
 But did he gie his soul's consent
 Although he did the wrong?
 We love him even wi' a stain,
 Nae matter wha may ban;
 We love him for he did maintain
 The liberty of Man.

And till the ages a' are fled,
 And time shall cease to roll,
 His "Scot's wha hae wi' Wallace bled,"
 Shall fire the freeman's soul.
 Hail! Minstrel o' the brave and true,
 Tho' Scotia's pride thou art,
 In spirit thou belongest to
 The universal heart.

XXVIII.—"HE WAS A TRUE POET."

BY GEORGE SAVAGE, *Esq., of the Baltimore Bar.*

From an address delivered Jan. 25, 1886, before the Caledonian Club of Baltimore, Maryland.

ALL lovers of Burns may ask, with pride and confidence: "Why, after so many winds have sighed requiems over his grave, does he live in the hearts of millions?" The answer cannot be given briefly and yet it may be measurably epitomized in the statement that in his sympathies, pathos, humour, imagination and fire he was a *true* poet. He laid his own *warm* heart close to those of his fellow-men, listened, with a poet's ear and sensibility, to their beatings, and, gifted and inspired by God, voiced their deepest emotions. With a master's hand he touched the hearts of his fellows and made the music of human life and human sympathy come forth sweet and resonant for all time. His poems tell us so much of love, joy, hope, suffering and resignation, and they speak to us so naturally, simply and tenderly, that we listen and receive their lessons with the eagerness, the trustfulness and the thankfulness of children. He was the poet of the heart, of the hearthstone, and of nature. He sang because he felt, and all who read him feel and sing with him because he deeply touches them. Nothing was too lowly for him to love and to hallow with his pen, and his was "a soul like an *Æolian* harp in whose strings the common wind, as it passed through them, changed itself into articulate melody." The voice of nature—that nature one touch of which makes the whole world kin—is heard in his lines, and he wrote not for one age but for all ages. He dealt with what Wordsworth calls "the essential passions," and he evoked from them what is most vivid, powerful and poetic in them. He made his appeal to the heart, and the re-

sponses have been and will continue to be at once evidences of personal attachment and tributes to his genius. He threw around homely human nature—not half so homely or prosaic as it seems—the halo of his sympathy, and invested it with the charm which poetry, truthful and glowing, can give it. Not alone the sufferings of his kind moved him, but his heart was alive to all created things, and he wrote as truthfully of the wounded hare, poor Maille, the mouse whose nest his ploughshare had rudely upturned, and the mountain daisy whose fate he saw and mourned as of "man's inhumanity to man." The sentiments and manners he felt and saw in himself and his rustic compeers around him were themes sufficiently inspiring for him, and his muse delighted to linger amid the scenes of rural life and to bless the homes of the poor. His ideas were his own, and he borrowed but little from classic stores. He knew what the cottage where religion, virtue and worth reign may contain, and he told the story with a poet's tenderness. He taught wisdom and charity of speech and action, and he sympathized with whatever has the power

"To raise a man aboon the brute
 And mak' him ken' himsel'."

He wrote not for the critics but for mankind. "We cannot rightly estimate a poet until we know whether or not he has understood the delicate analogies which exist between the animate and inanimate, and how and whence he has drawn his similes, in a word what is his conception of the beautiful, and what comparisons he makes. Tried by that test Burns must be placed in the highest rank.

His ideals were women and flowers. He could not have had higher ones and hence his similes are of the best. If you will read (or should I not say reread?) his poems and especially those which tell of Phillis and Miss Cruickshank, you will find that his mind and heart were filled with the loveliest pictures based on his ideals."

"He had faults as an author and a man, and I am not his apologist. But when we reflect upon his constant struggles and his sufferings, mental and physical,

'In poverty's low, barren vale,'

when we think upon the sad fate which condemned him from early childhood to the hour of his death to toil, hardship, dependency and want; when we see how his proud, ambitious and sensitive nature was galled by the adverse circumstances which surrounded him, and when we ponder over his temptations, trials, sorrows and disappointments, and yet hear him sing—now plaintively—now joyfully—now sadly—we almost forget his weakness and errors in our gladness and gratitude that amid all and despite of all he wrote for us a priceless legacy."

XXIX.—SONG.

WRITTEN FOR BURNS'S ANNIVERSARY, 1867.

Tune—"Whistle o'er the lave o't."

BY WILLIAM MURDOCH.

O, COULD I fledge my Muse's wing
To soar aboon this earthly ring,
Midst fields of ether would I sing
O' Scotia's matchless Robin!
For though he was of low degree,
He had a muckle share o' glee,
And when a drap was in his e'e,
Wha then could match wi' Robin?

Whene'er he touched his rustic lyre
Auld Scotland's heart bleazed like a fire,
Her wives and weans, the son, the sire,
Alike were fond o' Robin:
And, oh! sae weel's he lo'ed a crack,
About the times a lang while back,
When Scotland sighed, and Wallace spak'
To honest men like Robin!

And wha e'er lo'ed his land sae weel,
'Mang folks at hame, or yet afiel',
As this same honest ploughman chiel,
That's kent as Scotland's Robin?
He lo'ed her hills, he lo'ed her dales,
Her wild cascades and flowery vales,
And wished her foes a towmont's ails
In toothache form did Robin.

The ill-haired loon wha'd jar his fame,
Or breathe a stigma on his name,
May ill-brew'd drink distress his wame,
Till ance he prays for Robin.
A better man ne'er held a plough
Nor ane mair bauld, 'tween me and you—
The very clergy had to bow,
And yield some points to Robin!

Sour bigotry condemned the chiel,
Because he lo'ed us a' sae weel,
E'en for the very "Hornie Deil"
A kindly wish had Robin;
And if he's gane, as some would say,
Along the braid and dangerous way,
I fear, I fear, that mony mae,
Gaed aff alang wi' Robin.

Noo here, my frien's, I'll drap my sang,
But ere we rise awa' to gang,
Lets' gie a cheer baith loud and lang,
For Scotland's peerless Robin:
An' while we cheer if ane be mute,
Deil twist his ill-faur'd cankry snout,
'Till ance he's fain to bellow out,—
"Hip, hip, hurrah!" for Robin.

XXX.—JOHNNIE DOWIE'S TAVERN, A FAVOURITE HAUNT OF BURNS.

BY A. M. MACLEOD, in the *Dominion Ills. Monthly*, May 1892.

IN Liberton's Wynd (Edinburgh) stood Johnnie Dowie's tavern, sacred to Burns, as was the White Horse to Johnson. The name of Liberton's Wynd occurs in a charter

of James III., as far back as 1477; in later times, after the destruction of the Old Tolbooth, the "Heart of Midlothian," it had the unenviable notoriety of being the place of public execution. Henry Mackenzie was born in it. "Mine host" of the famous tavern, Johnnie Dowie himself, decked out with his cocked hat, knee and shoe buckles and cross-headed cane, was none too grand to draw the cork of his brown ale and fill for his guests the long slender glasses. Nor Loch trouts and Welsh rabbits were the delicacies for which Dowie's was most esteemed. But what were they in comparison with the immaterial banquet—the "flow of song" if not the "feast of reason"—which must have been free to the choice spirits of the place when the poet ploughman began to come among them. In a small dark room, known as his "coffin," Burns composed several of his best songs—among them "O poortith cauld and restless love:"—and revelled far into the night, or morning, with the pair immortalized in "O Willie brewed a peck o' maut"—schoolmasters, both of them. Johnnie Dowie, we gather from the bard, had no law about shutting up, or if he had, it was not like that of the Medes and Persians:

"It is the moon, I ken her horn,
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie:
She shines sae bright, to wyle us hame—
But by my sooth she'll bide a wee."

The stern moralist who is so hard on Burns,

may well be reminded of the drinking habits of this day. Five-bottle and six-bottle men were to be found on the Scottish bench and in the Scottish pulpit. A tavern was the common resort of men of wealth and standing; judges and lawyers adjourned to it for their "Meridian" or twelve o'clock dram, and spent in it many a festive night. Men of business and magistrates often transacted their affairs at the tavern, and invariably when it was transacted elsewhere retired there to drink to its success. The Star and Garter in Writer's Court, the haunt of Pleydell, to which Dandie Dinmont conducted Colonel Mannering, was another of these famous taverns, and Scott's picture is from life. Cleriheugh's, as it was generally called, was in appearance so wretched, that Colonel Mannering "could hardly conceive how a gentleman of a liberal profession and good society could choose such a place for social indulgence." Mean as it was in appearance, however, solid comfort was to be found there and in others of its kind, and substantial fortunes were often made by tavern-keepers. At the White Horse Inn, though the best rooms were over the stables, and Johnson complained bitterly of the slovenliness of the *ménage*, the value of the napery (house linen) was reckoned at five hundred pounds. Dowie, Burns's host, left a handsome fortune to his son, a major in the army.

XXXI.—HERRICK AND BURNS.*

From "Herrick: an Ode," by Rev. ARTHUR JOHN LOCKHART.

FAINT elmy tenderness! ethereal green!
Soft phantom-beauty, seen
On frilled and fluted tips in lofty-lighted eve!
Gazing, our youth gleams on us rayed through
tears:
So, when thy page appears,
The dancing lights start up the leaves
between,—
The subtle joy strikes home, while yet most
tenderly we grieve.
Thus does the open Primrose shine,
The Rose new blossom from thy line,
The Lily in a crystal live,
As thou th' unfading shrine may'st give;

While all life's glancing waves express
A sympathetic tenderness.
Yet who can give the heart relief
With all the subtle witchery of grief?
For, while we hear thee mourn the Daffodils,
Each thoughtful pulse a sweet compassion fills:
So, later, one upon the fields of Ayr
Carolled his joy, or musical despair
Challenged the birds on every thorny tree.
Now ever Sorrow's wraith will croon
By banks and braes of Bonny Doon:

* "As a lyric poet, he (Herrick) is, in range of thought and fulness of natural music second only to Robert Burns."—*John Morley*.

'Mid warbled rapture, loitering slow
Will love walk antheming her woe.
Lo ! dreaming memory turns amain
To his immortal bliss and pain,—

Thy brother-bard and generous mate,
Who wept the Daisy's kindred fate,—
Musing, while yet the wounded flower lay fair,
The drooping, the decay, the fading that
must be.

XXXII.—BURNS AND BYRON.

FROM THE *ABERDEEN HERALD* and *WEEKLY FREE PRESS*.

THE Burns anniversary celebrations have once more come and gone : and as the centenary of the birth of Lord Byron happened within three days of the same time (he was born on 22nd January, 1788, and Burns on 25th January, 1759), the contrast in the measure of sentiment attaching to the name of the "English bard" as compared with that which clings around the name of his Scottish brother comes out very strongly. In the case of Byron, who was undoubtedly a great poet, with the exception of a religious service amongst the Greek community in London, his centenary has passed by with almost nothing in the way of public celebration. As regards Burns, so far as can be judged, there have been quite the average number of eloquent speeches delivered at banquets of one kind and another in proposing the toast of "The Immortal Memory," with quite the average number of Burns's songs by way of accompaniment. There have not been fewer formal papers read, in which a fresh estimate has been attempted of the gifts and influence of the national bard ; and certainly not fewer demonstrations in the nature of Burns concerts in celebration of the recurrence of the "natal day." And a curious feature in this latter relation is the extent to which temperance reformers, and teetotallers generally, have come to feel that they have common property in the great lyric bard who more than any other has glorified strong drink in varying strains. Verily it must be admitted that the extent to which Burns now finds favour in temperance circles is even more wonderful than the changed attitude of the pulpit toward him in regard of his having penned the "Holy Fair" and various other things. We do not view it otherwise than as in the first place, a marked testimony to the unapproached power of the man, who not only gave vocal expression to the whole

gamut of feeling that sways the hearts of the common people of Scotland, but sang songs that to the end of time must, in one form or other, stir the heart of humanity to its depths ; and in the second place we gladly accept it as indicative of the steady growth of a broader, healthier moral sentiment in the community. So let the Burns cult, if cult it must be, go on. But let it go on within reasonable bounds. We do not object to any one's endeavouring to place Burns upon the highest pedestal among lyric poet's, because he deserves the place : nor do we imagine that the best of his songs, or even such pieces as "Tam o' Shanter" or "The Cottar's Saturday Night," can be overpraised, within reason, simply because they have never been excelled and seldom equalled. But we do not see the least propriety in, much less necessity for, a batch of fresh discourses year after year, the drift of which is to make out that after all Burns was a remarkably "sober" man in respect of strong drink ; that he was a strict observer of the moral proprieties in speech and behaviour ; and that he never really indulged in utterances which a religious person could object to as in the nature of scoffing. It is no real service to the memory of Burns for anniversary eulogists to ransack every odd, out-of-the-way corner in the "Burns Literature" for far-fetched, weakish arguments of that sort—with the attempted watering down or combative criticism of Thomas Carlyle's famous Essay. And the thought is apt to strike one that if the veritable Robert Burns himself were to reappear in the flesh during the delivery of certain of these orations his commentary would be apt to be the reverse of complimentary, if he did not even go the length of pulling up the orator by an emphatic "Stop your blether, freen !"

XXXIII.—BURNS IN EDINBURGH.

FROM THE *SCOTSMAN*, JANUARY 25, 1889.

IN the brief life of Burns, few dates were more critical for himself than that of his arrival in the Scottish metropolis. There was no formal reception of the new *Makkar* who had come fresh from the November furrows to Edinburgh, and now stood on the pavement

With his ploughman stoop,
And his black flaming eyes.

There had been but a side invitation, suggested rather than expressed—the invitation of Dr. Blacklock, conveyed to Burns from the manse of Loudon, and after some delay, by the hands of Gavin Hamilton. The invitation, slender though it was, probably jumped with the bard's intention of reconnoitring the capital with a view to the publication of a new edition of his poems. There was, no doubt, in the proud heart of the poet a little chagrin at the refusal of Wee Johnnie to undertake a second edition without such ample guarantee against loss as had made the first venture safe. Another list of local subscribers was not to be—perhaps was never even, thought of; the poet was too poor to advance the cost of the paper; and the canny printer at Killie was too cautious to go farther than he could see. It is allowed that he had weak eyes, which were open only to narrow interests. But the poet's ambition was not to be snuffed out by the parsimony of a provincial publisher. There was a world elsewhere to which he would appeal. He was then as certain of his possession of unusual power as he was at any time afterwards to be. The confirmation of subsequent popular applause raised in no degree the estimate which from the first he had formed of his poetical ability. The "rustic bard" accordingly stalked into Edinburgh one day in the end of November. The historical memories of the place took a firm hold of his imagination at once. The romantic site of the old city had doubtless its effect; but mere scenic loveliness, severed from human associations, had comparatively small interest for Burns. It was the Castle rather than the rock which rears it so picturesquely to the sky; it was the forsaken seat of "Legislation's sovereign

powers" rather than the ridge of hill upon which it rests; it was ancient Holyrood rather than the beetling crags and green slopes of Arthur's Seat, in whose shadow it lies, that chiefly caught and kept his eye, and thrilled with mingled awe and tenderness the romantic chords of his heart. It is, of course, not denied that he was an enthusiastic admirer of the natural scenery in and around Edinburgh. His walks and talks in the neighbourhood—with Naysmith, the artist, on many a morning, to Arthur's Seat, to see the sun rise from the sea, and with Dugald Stewart to the Braids and towards the Pentlands—sufficiently prove that he was. But even the natural landscape, however lovely, acquired its chief charm in his view from its connection with rural labour and rustic life; the sight of smoking cottages gave him more pleasure than the Arcadian scenery in the midst of which they were set.

Life in the historical city contrasted sharply with the life from which he had just emerged. Robust though he was, both of body and mind, the contrast was powerful enough, in its action upon a nature of extreme sensitiveness, to affect his physical well-being, and throw him, as we say, "out of sorts" for several weeks. He had constant headaches for more than a fortnight after his arrival. To the inhabitants he remained "in his auld use and wont." He entered their fashionable and literary circles in no ways overawed either by the titles of rank or the reputation of learning. But neither did he despise the distinctions of society. There was no formal introduction, as there had been no formal invitation. If Blacklock's letter brought him to Edinburgh, it was not upon Blacklock that he waited immediately on his arrival. Probably Dugald Stewart, and the friends of Dalrymple of Orangefield, were the first persons to whom he presented himself. In a few days he had made acquaintance with rank and fashion, as represented by the Duchess of Gordon and the Glencairn family; and with law and learning, as represented by Henry Erskine and the professorial brethren of Dugald Stewart. Henry Mackenzie, who

then represented literature, was also his friend, and announced in the *Lounger* to the literary world beyond Edinburgh the rare merits of the new poet. Burns may be said to have formally introduced himself to Edinburgh when Creech had his poems ready for sale. With these poems in his hand he made his ceremonious bow, and introduced himself to the notice of literary Edinburgh. What he said on the occasion is contained in his prose "Dedication," and in his better known poetical "Address." But this was not the first time that, hat in hand, so to say, Burns stood behind the footlights. There was a previous appearance about nine months before; only—to keep up the metaphor—it was in a provincial theatre, and the audience consisted for the most part of men with whose ways he was intimately familiar; for they were very much his own. The preface to the *Kilmarnock Edition* of his poems is the worst specimen of Burns's prose that we know. It was probably written in haste. It is ungrammatical, tautological, pedantic, inconsistent. Yet it gives the impression of a man of a vigorous mind, capable in a rough and ready fashion of making his mark anywhere, and in other ways than with the pen. There is a robust personality in it, which comes forward now and again in the latter half, with the clearness of genuine sincerity, from amidst a mist of appropriated phrases. It is the idea of supercilious criticism that rouses him to the expression of natural feeling; for example, "If any critic catches at the word 'genius,' the author tells him, once for all, that he certainly looks upon himself as possessed of some." And, "If I stand fairly convicted of dulness and nonsense, let me be done by as I would do by others—let me be condemned without mercy to contempt and oblivion." There is something here which makes his application of the word "trifles" to his poems either insincere or at least conventional. Some phrases are happy and characteristic, and show the ambition of a master of style; such are "The glorious dawns of poor, unfortunate Fergusson." "My highest pulse of vanity," and "Kindling at the flame of the elder poets."

The Dedication to the Caledonian Hunt of the first Edinburgh Edition, written on the

4th April, 1787, is a most remarkable production. It is poetical in its imagery, its bold (and just) assumptions, and its outspoken fearlessness. The modern taste is offended with the big initial letters, which are meant to emphasise the rhetoric, and with the frequent personification of abstract qualities and conditions; but there is genuine feeling under these rhetorical encumbrances. The style is no mere stand of armour; there is a warrior under the mail, and fearless eyes flash through the barred helmet. The characteristic touches here are such as—"Where should I so properly look for patronage as to the illustrious of my native land?" "The poetic genius of my country found me like Elisha at the plough, and threw her inspiring mantle over me." "I do not present this Address with the venal soul of a servile author; I was bred to the plough and am independent." This reveals the kind of patronage he looked for. Again, "I come to claim the common Scottish name with you, my illustrious countrymen." But it also contains a prayer! "I come to proffer my warmest wishes to the Monarch of the Universe for your welfare and happiness." A noticeable feature is the unenvious, the noble sympathy of this ploughman with the noblemen and gentlemen of the hunt both in their social pastime and in the privacy of their domestic happiness:—"When you go forth to waken the echoes in the ancient and favourite amusement of your forefathers, may Pleasure ever be of your party; and may Social joy await your return! When harassed in courts or camps with the jostlings of bad men and bad measures, may the honest consciousness of Worth attend your return to your native Seats, and domestic Happiness with a smiling welcome meet you at your gates!" Was ever a band of noblemen addressed in such fashion by a ploughman before? There is a passage in the Dedication—penned, it may be noticed in passing, doubtless at a sitting; for the strain, though elevated, is connected, and quite sustained from commencement to close—which one cannot read without recalling the metrical "Address to Edinburgh," so much and so mysteriously maligned by the late Alexander Smith. "While tuning my wild artless notes to the rural loves and joys of my

native Kyle," says the poet in effect in his Dedication, and almost in these words, "the genius whispered me to come to this ancient metropolis, and lay my songs before you." The same image, softened and beautified, and expressed with a charming modesty, appears in the Address—

From marking wildly-scattered flowers
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honoured shade.

The old associations of Edinburgh had an overpowering effect upon his imagination which chastened his spirit and softened his self-assertion. The gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt produced no such effect. He approached them with a demand—it is too regal to be called a request—for their patronage, and gave them, with the unconscious

carelessness of a genuinely incidental allusion, an interpretation of patronage which deprived them of flattery if they looked for it. He claims common ground with them as a loyal Scotsman, whose highest ambition was to sing in his country's service; and without concealing his rank and garb, accosts them with the frankness of an equal and the affection of a brother. Burns introduced himself without reserve. It was his way, and the nobleness of it none can deny. It would probably have been better for his material welfare if he had exercised a little reserve, and submitted to his patrons with more docility on the one hand, and less emphatic demonstration of gratitude on the other. Neither in accepting favours nor in receiving advice was he the model protégé that Patronage loves to take in hand.

XXXIV.—BURNS AND BYRON.

BY MOSES H. NICKERSON.

THE peasant bard, (forgive this tear),
To Scotland and to Nature dear,
Was born with sweetest spell to bind
The captive souls of all mankind.
The wreath which Coila's hand bestows
With never-dying lustre glows,
But brightest where these two entwine—
A mistress fair, a glass of wine!

When England's strongest noble swept
The chords where love and terror slept,
And roused them to a loftier tone
Than e'er before or since was known;

His genius, paling from the skies,
Illumined for admiring eyes
Those twin stars o'er a sun's decline—
A mistress fair, a glass of wine!

O genius! How superbly near
It brings the ploughman to the peer,
Till worlds that glimmer'd on the sight
Receive from them full warmth and light.
And yet its most resplendent ray
Would fail to animate the clay
Without those founts of all that's fine—
A mistress fair, a glass of wine.

XXXV.—THE REID MINIATURE PORTRAIT OF BURNS.

FROM *THE SCOTSMAN*, FRIDAY, MARCH 18th, 1892.

A WATER-COLOUR miniature of Robert Burns, possessing strong claims to be regarded, not only as an authentic portrait of our great national poet, but as one which he himself referred to in terms of especial praise, has just been added to the collection of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. It forms part of the very miscellaneous collection bequeathed by the late Mr. W. F. Watson to the Board of Manufactures. Unfortunately, no par-

ticulars of its previous history have been preserved; but it is entered in the catalogue of the illustrations of "Edinburgh: its Houses and its Noted Inhabitants," exhibited by Mr. Watson to the Architectural Society of Scotland in 1865, as "a miniature coloured profile of the poet in ivory, taken at Dumfries."

The miniature is executed on a thin plate of ivory, 3 by 2¼ inches in size, the painted portion taking the form of an oval, and the

corners being left in untouched whiteness. The face of the poet, represented in pure profile turned to our left, and relieved against a brown, stippled background, is painted with great care and delicacy, and is that of an older man than the face which appears in the well-known portrait by Nasmyth. The cheek is thin, the cheek-bone appearing prominently; and there is a general look of ill-health, the lips being firmly compressed, as though through the endurance of habitual suffering. The eyebrow is straight and dark; the eye particularly dark, brilliant, and striking; the hair thick and of a dark brown, not tied behind, falling in a short whisker in front of the ear, and with that high bare space at the side, above the temples, which is characteristic of the authentic portraits of Burns. The figure, which is seen about midway to the waist, is clad in a dark blue, single-breasted coat, with a wide collar, and showing three brass buttons, over a yellowish green vest striped with red. At the breast is what seems to be a shirt-front and white cravat; but some change has been made here; it looks as though a shirt-frill had been first painted in, and afterwards had been removed by being worked into the dark background. The neck has sustained an injury, which has been retouched by some unknown hand; and small portions of the colour have been removed from several parts of the background and the hair. A piece of paper has been affixed to the foot of the miniature and turned over the back, the part in front bearing the autograph of the poet, "of R——t Burns, Excise officer," faint and half obliterated by time; and the part turned round behind bearing a circular official stamp in red, showing a lion rampant concournée, and the words "Excise Office." The ivory has been pasted down upon a thin piece of wood, covered with gold paper, now dim and faded, and is enclosed in a heavy gilded frame. The wood forms the back of this frame; and upon its outer side is pasted the armorial book-plate of "John Mitchell, Dumfries."

The miniature is in exactly the same condition in which it was acquired by the Trustees of the Gallery, except that the frame has been regilded, and a mount of velvet has been placed round the ivory.

To those who are familiar with the face of Burns, as shown in his most authentic portrait, of which Alexander Nasmyth executed three versions, the original being in the National Gallery of Scotland, the present miniature cannot fail to be regarded as a most convincing and unmistakable likeness; and so accurate and thorough is it in the form and moulding of all the features, so perceptive of even such little details as the grey-blue shadow that appears on the lip and chin from the strong dark beard carefully shaved, that the work has manifestly been painted from the life. Only two other contemporary or nearly contemporary portraits showing the poet's face in profile are known to exist; and both may be studied in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. The first is the silhouette or "shade" executed by J. Miers in 1787, in which the face appears turned to our right; the other is the posthumous medallion modelled in 1801 by William Tassie, a very poor work, and of no authenticity as a portrait.

The correspondence of Burns gives some indication of the period when the present miniature may have been painted. In May 1795, the poet writes George Thomson, from Dumfries, that—"There is an artist of very considerable merit now in this town, who has hit the most remarkable likeness of what I am at this moment that, I think, was ever taken by anybody. It is a small miniature, and as it will be in your town getting itself be-crystalized, etc., I have some thoughts of suggesting to you to prefix a vignette taken from it to my song, "*Contented wi' little and canty wi' mair*," in order that the portrait of my face and the picture of my mind may go down the stream of time together." Again, on the 29th January, 1796, he writes, from Dumfries, to Mrs. Walter Riddell, Halloweats:—"Apropos of pictures, I am just sitting to Reid in this town for a miniature, and I think he has hit the best likeness of me ever taken. When you are at any time so idle in town as to call at Reid's painting room, and mention to him that I spoke of such a thing to you, he will show it to you, or else he will not: for both the miniature's existence and its destiny are an inviolable

secret, and therefore very properly trusted in part to you."

It has generally been assumed that the portraits mentioned in the letters above quoted are two distinct works. The Rev. Dr. P. Hatley Waddell was of opinion that the portrait in his possession, which he had engraved in his edition of the poet's works, is that referred to in the first-quoted letter; and he attributes it—without, however, stating his grounds for doing so—to "a wandering artist of the name of Jamieson." Mr. Scott Douglas, on the other hand, "suspects" that the portrait in Dr. Waddell's edition was that executed by Reid in 1796.

No one, however, who admits the portrait undoubtedly painted by Alexander Nasmyth from the life to be the standard portrait of Burns, and has carefully studied that work, will be disposed to admit that the hideous head engraved in Dr. Waddell's edition can possibly have been intended for that of the poet; it certainly could never have been regarded either by the poet or his friends as a successful likeness, or selected by Burns as that which he desired to be carried down on "the stream of time." There is the further objection that the portrait engraved by Dr. Waddell is not "a miniature" at all, but a cabinet-sized oil picture, executed on a mahogany panel, some nine inches by seven in size; and certainly it is not a work which its original possessor would ever have thought of "be-crystallizing" or protecting with glass, in the manner necessary to a miniature.

There is, however, nothing inconsistent in the theory that in both the letters we have quoted Burns refers to the same portrait; indeed, the strong and very similar expressions of praise which he uses on the two occasions ("the most remarkable likeness of what I am at this moment that, I think, was ever done by anybody;" "I think he has hit the best likeness of me ever taken"), tend to indicate that in both cases he was writing of the same work. It is quite possible that Reid ("Read, a wandering limner," as Allan Cunningham, in his life of Raeburn, styles him, "who found his way on a time to Dumfries, where he painted heads of Burns and his Jean on ivory") may have been called away from the town after he had begun the miniature in

1795, and been only able to complete it on his return in the beginning of the following year.

And there are strong grounds for believing that the miniature now under consideration is none other than this identical work. Collector John Mitchell, of Dumfries, was a friend of Burns, and his superior officer in the Excise. At page 156 of Chambers' "Life and Works of Burns" (1852), it is stated that the poet possessed a critical friend in Collector Mitchell, who having been educated for the Church, possessed a mind not ill qualified to judge of literary compositions. At his death, a whole sheaf of first copies of poems and songs were found in the collector's repositories, on which it was understood he had been asked to give his opinion. The bundle was lost by the family, and has never been heard of. It was to Mitchell that Burns, some seven months before his death, addressed his lines:—

"Friend of the poet, tried and leal,
Wha, wanting thee, might beg or steal,

intimating that

I modestly fu' fain would hint it,
That one pound one, I sairly want it."

It is, therefore, not at all improbable that, after the poet's death, the present miniature may have passed into Mitchell's possession, either in settlement of a debt, or simply as a memorial of his friend: that he affixed his book-plate to the back, pasted the poet's autograph—from one of the Excise documents to which his official position would give him access—at the bottom; and placed the ivory—fated never to be sent to Edinburgh to be enclosed in a metal oval, as originally intended, and duly "be-crystallized" in orthodox miniature fashion—in its present wooden frame.

It would be interesting to know whether any representative of Collector Mitchell still survives; and whether there is any record of a portrait of the poet having been in his possession. Now that the matter is fully before the public, perhaps some fresh facts bearing on the matter may be elicited.

There is a passage in the "Letters of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe" which might throw some light upon the history of the por-

trait of Burns by Reid. In November 1829, writing to David Bridges, regarding the portrait of Burns by Taylor, Sharpe states that he saw at the house of Scott, a carver and gilder in Dumfries, portraits of the poet and his wife painted by Reid; and that, in reply to subsequent inquiries, he was informed that they had passed into the hands of Mrs. Burns. He adds the information that "Reid painted both in oil and water-colours; and after he had been some time in Dumfries, went, as I think, to Galloway, where he died." The statements of this letter, however, are to be received with extreme caution, for several of them are palpably erroneous. Thus Sharpe confuses the half-length cabinet-sized portrait by Taylor which was then submitted to him (a work certainly never out of the possession of the Taylor family till it was deposited in the Scottish National Picture Gallery) with the miniature painted by Taylor which he saw at Dumfries. Again, he mentions the drawing of "The Cottar's Saturday Night" as given by David Allan to the poet; while, as is well known, it was the gift of George Thomson.

It would appear that the "Reid" referred to in Burns's letter was Alexander Reid, son of John Reid of Kirkennan, near Dalbeattie, who executed many miniatures, and also oil portraits and landscapes, some of which have been engraved. He is known to have resided in London and Paris; and, on the death of

his elder brother in 1804, he acquired the above-named property, and settled there, dying in 1823, at the age of seventy-six. It is believed that at one time he had a studio at Dumfries, and there painted the miniature of Burns. No definite proof of this has as yet been forthcoming; but the fact that we have here an artist of the surname mentioned by Burns, closely associated with the south of Scotland, and executing miniatures at the time indicated, points very strongly to his being the painter referred to in the poet's letter. The known particulars of Alexander Reid's life are also in harmony with Kirkpatrick Sharpe's statement regarding the painter of the Burns portrait, that "he went, I think, to Galloway, where he died."

Several miniatures painted by Alexander Reid have been submitted to the authorities of the Portrait Gallery by one of his surviving relatives; and, in the opinion of the artists and experts who have examined them, they show considerable resemblance in artistic quality and method to the miniatures of Burns, and may not improbably be the work of the same hand.

But even if nothing further should be definitely ascertained regarding the history of this portrait of the great Scottish poet which has just been added to our national collection, we believe that, upon its own merits, it will rank as one of the most interesting and authentic representations of Burns that exist.

XXXVI.—TRIBUTE TO BURNS.

Attributed to THOMAS MOORE.

The Editor is indebted to Mr. GEORGE MARTIN, 181 Loval Ave, Montreal, for this unique contribution. Mr. MARTIN writes:—"Is not the simile at the close of these lines exceedingly impressive and beautiful. If you have never seen the stanzas before, you will treasure them as I have done, and esteem them as alike worthy of the Irish lyrist and his Scottish brother."

SWAN of the Nith! thy wing was light,
Thy plumes the whitest of the white,
And wild and wayward was thy flight
From wave to wave;
Thy course was one headstrong and bright;
E'en to thy grave.

Swan of the Nith! if aught in thee
Sullied thy whiteness, none should see
The blemish; men should view, like me,
Thy life's short dream,
And let thy faults like swan's feet be
Hid in the stream.

XXXVII.—MR. MARTIN CHAS. HARDIE'S CELEBRATED PAINTING
 "BURNS IN EDINBURGH, 1787."

FROM THE *SCOTTISH LEADER*.

THE scene selected by the artist is a meeting of the *literati* and other celebrities of Edinburgh, in the house of the Duchess of Gordon, to hear the great ploughman-poet read his verses. The exact position of the Gordon town-house at the time is not now known, but the artist has introduced as the background of his figures a charming interior of the period, one of the rooms of a house in Brown Street, Edinburgh, formerly occupied by Lord Elibank. Not only are the walls in excellent keeping with the old world forms and costumes, but they possess much refined and delicate beauty, with the crisp flutings of their pilasters and gilded enrichments, their painted festoons of pale blue ribbons terminating in rose-posies, and the landscapes—similar to those executed in many parts of Edinburgh by De la Cour, the Norries, and other decorators of the last century, both Scottish and foreign—sunk in the light-coloured panelling. The figure of the poet appears standing towards the left, one hand holding the manuscript of his "Winter Night," the other raised to emphasize the words which he pronounces as he contrasts the lot of the fortunate with that of the wretches "whom friends and fortune quite disown," and concludes, with dark raised eyes that flash in the light:—

"But deep this truth impressed my mind—
 Through all His works abroad,
 The heart, benevolent and kind,
 The most resembles God."

The costume of the poet is the blue coat with brass buttons, the yellow striped vest, and the light riding-breeches, and top boots, with which the portrait of Burns, by Nasmyth, have made all the world familiar; and the face, dark, swarthy, and impassioned, seems to have been mainly studied from the same source. Attitude and expression have both been excellently seized, and the whole is no unworthy rendering of the man whom Scotland has taken more closely than any other man to her heart. Opposite Burns, and fronting him, is his hostess, the Duchess of

Gordon, seated resplendent in rose-coloured drapery and gown of rich brocade, posed somewhat as she appears in Reynolds' half-length, her cheek propped by her hand, intently listening. Over the back of her chair appears the eager outstretched face of the fair Peggy Chalmers, and the raven-locked Miss Burnett leans upon a harp beside her; while on the right side is the seated figure of the pallid and snow-haired poet, Dr. Blacklock, and on the other, the erect, slim, soldierly shape of the Earl of Glencairn. Nearer the poet, seated at the dark old-fashioned table which occupies the centre of the room, is the portly form of William Fraser Tytler, the defender of Mary Queen of Scots, and beside him nursing his attenuated knee, the alert little figure of Lord Monboddo, the eccentric author of the "Origin and Progress of Language," his grotesque face given much as it was drawn by his friend John Brown, the excellent portaitist of the time, of whose art our own Society of Antiquaries possesses so many fine examples. A little more remote, a little less engrossed, is the critic and rhetorican, Dr. Hugh Blair, in wig and clerical bands; and near him Henry Mackenzie, "The Man of Feeling;" Creech, the publisher; and Alexander Nasymth, the portrait painter; while to the left, behind the poet, are seated Dr. Andrew Ferguson; the placid, grey-haired Dowager-Countess of Glencairn; and the meditative Dugald Stewart. The extreme left corner is occupied by a card-table, over which the young keen-faced Harry Erskine bends, directing the attention of the players to the marvellous recital; and this group is balanced on the right by a pair of servants in the Gordon liveries of white and red, set in the soft light of a curtained window, stopping their punch-brewing to listen to the poet; while in the centre of the room the eye is led away through a half-open door, thronged with the heads of eager domestics, into a remoter passage, with a vista of staircase window and a gleam of sharp clear daylight. Manifestly great care and much

thought and research have been expended upon the work. The painter has spared no pains in consulting the existing contemporary portraits of the persons whom he was to portray, and in bestowing upon his subject, so far as might be, the value of authenticity and truth to fact. But he has not been content to be merely accurately antiquarian; he has been artistic as well, and technically, has attained a higher point than he has reached in former works. The composition is well

managed and pleasing in result; the colouring is graceful and effective, though, perhaps, too strongly pronounced in certain of its scarlet tones; the various countenances are, for the most part, individual, and some of them are thoroughly delicate and transparent in texture; and the handling—especially the slighter work of the side groups of servants and card-players—is light, free, and full of a charming *finesse*.

XXXVIII.—BURNS.

FROM THE *GLASGOW WEEKLY MAIL*, January 30th 1892.

THE text of the lesson for the twenty-fifth was Robert Burns. He was born 133 years ago, by nature the son of a cottar, and by song the son of Apollo, though he first saw the light, not in a Grecian Temple, but in an Ayrshire clay-bigin', on a cold, roaring, January morning. The birth was, indeed, a peculiar one, as the child himself lived to tell us in one of his autobiographical songs. There happened to be present on the occasion a gossip who had some knowledge of palmistry. Keeking in the baby's "small document of a loof," she saw strange things which were to be verified in the future. She did not prophesy clear skies and smooth seas. Like common mortals, he was to have mixed fortunes, yet with a strong, brave heart. He was to be no coof, and he was to be a credit to the whole world of happy minds and loving hearts. The world knows how the prophecy was fulfilled. Many a time has the story been told, and yet it remains unexhausted. It is not, however, our purpose to repeat the facts of a life as remarkable as any one that has burned itself into the memory of mankind. It may be enough, and certainly it is not too much, to say, in the language of an enthusiast, that Burns was "the means of redeeming his country, not Scotland alone, but Britain, both at home and abroad, from a condition of wretched poetic common-place and sterility." Just at Burns's time it was the dead season of song. Nothing but the music of frogs was heard in the land. When he opened his inspired lips, "it was as if the

clouded heavens and their midnight woods had burst into fresh dawns of beauty and sweet rivers of song." He sang like the unpaid lark; and we can pardon those who have expressed the opinion that his legacy of poesy "still remains as imperishable as truth." These words may seem extravagant to the unillumined mind; and they unquestionably pitch high the note of praise; but the instinct of Burns's countrymen is more safely to be trusted than the acutest critic that ever spilt ink. One of these clever gentlemen has recently said that Burns has ceased to be read. The same thing has been asserted, not only of Burns, but of Shakespeare and the Bible itself. A single question will be sufficient to dispose of such absurdities. If Burns, Shakespeare and the Bible are not read, how are the thick-coming editions disposed of by the foolish publishers? The fact is that they are all sold; and he would be a rash man who would dare to say that they are bought for the purpose of merely making a show on the bookshelves. Of course no book is read to the exclusion of every other book, and, in that way, it is quite true that Burns is just taken in his turn—a turn which it has been said by good men, is too long and absorbing for the good of those who are thought to love the Poet not wisely, but too well. That is an illusion. Burns is a great moral and intellectual tonic, and an infallible cure for poetic influenza. If, however, Burns is not read anywhere, it may be explained by saying that he has got so fixed in the memory

and mixed with the blood of his countrymen, that the printed book is not necessary. The poet's songs have been so long and so passionately sung, that the very air is impregnated and rings with them, so that the Scot inhales them as the breath of his life. It is not easy to forget—it is impossible not to read—such a man as Burns, who is, in the

language of Lord Rosebery and others "the greatest of Scotchmen." He is, indeed, so great that he is not only remembered every day in the year, but he receives all to himself an extra day, on which the heart of Scotland turns to him as the sun-worshipper turns to the sun as the fountain of light, vitality, and comfort.

XXXIX.—IMPORTANT BURNSIANA "FIND."

OLD MINUTE BOOK OF MAUCLINE CONVERSATION SOCIETY.

FROM THE *KILMARNOCK STANDARD*, June 25th, 1892.

By favour of Mr. John Love, Junr., a native of this district, from New South Wales (son of Mr. John Love, Hurlford)—at present on a visit to his friends in that locality—we are enabled to lay before our readers copious details of an interesting Burnsiana "find" made by that gentleman in Victoria, in the shape of the old minute-book of a Mauchline Conversation or Debating Society which no doubt owed its existence to the Poet and his brother Gilbert. The manner in which the book came into Mr. Love's possession is described as follows in a letter addressed by him to the *Kilmarnock Standard*:—

"Some time ago I travelled from Northern Queensland to 'the back country' in New South Wales, between the rivers Lachlan and Murrumbidgee, a distance of 2000 miles, to visit the sheep station of an uncle—Mr. David Boyd of Uley, an old Kilmarnock man—and whilst there I met Mr. William Fisher of Ellerslee, a neighbouring squatter. In all matters pertaining to Burns Mr. Fisher is a great enthusiast, and one evening when discussing our national poet, a subject of never-failing interest to the Scot abroad, he produced the old book in question, which he informed me he had received from a Mauchline man in Victoria, whose name at the moment I forget. I stated that I considered the book a *rara avis* in its way, and when he offered to present it to me I said I would deprive him of it on condition that when I arrived in Scotland I would place it before your good selves or some authority on such matters, and advise him of your verdict as to its value as a relic of the time of Burns. Here it might interest you to know that Mr.

Fisher was reared about Auchinleck, and whilst still a young man he emigrated to Victoria."

The "old book," which contains so many evidences of intellectual activity in Mauchline a century ago, is not a common pass-book, but, as its contents were presumably intended for preservation, it is bound in leather, with the old-fashioned flap with which we are familiar in some ancient pocket copies of the Bible. The flap has partly disappeared, although otherwise the book is in excellent condition. The penmanship throughout is for the most part clear and legible, though the various entries frequently differ in the character of the hand, sometimes being executed with the boldness and confidence of the ready scribe, and again with a timidity and irregularity indicative of less familiarity with the pen. There are likewise different degrees of proficiency in the art of spelling evinced—degrees which respectively correspond as a rule with the freedom or stiffness of the caligraphy. Those ploughmen and tradespeople in and around Mauchline whose association in the pursuit of knowledge is here chronicled, were doubtless influenced by the example of their compeers at Tarbolton, who, at the instigation and under the inspiring guidance of "Rob Mossgiel," had formed themselves for similar purposes into the Bachelors' Club. The direct influence of "Mossgiel," however, is not so traceable in the rules and constitution of the Mauchline Society, which in their less copious and less ambitious statement, savour more of the douce and moderate spirit of Gilbert Burns than of the soaring and fervid genius of his

elder brother Robert. The name of the latter does not appear in the list of original members, and there is no indication that he was ever present at any of the meetings. Gilbert, indeed, appears to have been the moving and sustaining influence among this Mauchline coterie, a faithful and regular sharer of the discussions to which the monthly meetings were devoted, absenting himself only when sterner duties claimed his attention. The reasons for Robert's non-appearance among them are not far to seek. The date of their first meetings is 30th October, 1786—a momentous month in a momentous year for the Poet, who at this period was passing through some of the darkest and most hopeless experiences of his checkered life. During that October, Mary Campbell had died, whose name and memory, though he cherished it sacredly in the shrine of imagination till the end of his days, suggest to us other relationships, at this time in their most unhappy phase, which had caused Burns to publish his poems in Kilmarnock in August, that he might raise nine guineas to purchase a passage to the West Indies. On the night of the 30th October he indited his epistle to Major Logan, in which he refers to his projected emigration and his unlucky amours with the levity he could so well affect:—

“ My loss I mourn, but not repent it ;
 I'll seek my pursie where I tint it ;
 Ance to the Indies I were wonted
 Some cantraip hour,
 By some sweet elf I'll yet be dinted ;
 Then, *vive l' amour !* ”

The Mauchline Club therefore was begun at a time when Burns had his hands full and his mind distracted by untoward events. But as it was the “mirkest hour” in the night of his troubles, it was also drawing near the dawn. From the 30th October till the 27th November the train of events occurred which led up to his departure for Edinburgh on the latter date, there to be introduced to the great contemporary world of letters, and to take part in scenes very different from those enacted by the little knot of villagers in Mauchline which was animated by the presence of his brother Gilbert. From the minute-book we can gather many interesting facts relating to the ups and downs of the Society.

The hour of meeting varied with the season and the length of the day, ranging from 5.30 in Winter to 7.30 in Summer, or as it is sometimes expressed in the quainter language of an era when railway time-tables were yet in the future, from “half-six” to “half-eight” o'clock. On several occasions the attendance has been so small that the discussion of the question of the evening is postponed, and during the last year which the record covers Gilbert Burns is less frequently a participant in the debates, modestly dubbed “conversations.” His own anxieties at Mossgiel no doubt had something to do with his absence at various times, as we find him writing to Robert at Ellisland as early as Sept. 4, 1790, that he is “much distressed with the bad weather,” and evidently weighed down by the manifold cares of an anxious husbandman. The employment of the fines imposed for non-attendance without excuse in the purchase of books, which formed a sort of library in connection with the Society, is interesting, as the members' perusal of these publications would keep them in touch with the great world of the metropolis, to which they were now fondly linked by the figure that “Mossgiel” was cutting among its big-wigs and nobility. The minute-book contains a statement of accounts, showing sums received by way of fines, entry money, etc., and items of outlay. Among the latter are: Purchase of the “Mirror” and “Lounger,” 17s. 6d.; Rousseau's “Emilius” and Voltaire's “History of Peter the Great,” 12s. 6d.; “The American Wanderer,” 6s. 3d.; “The Man of Feeling,” 3s.; and purchasing and binding five volumes of Sir John Sinclair's “Statistical Account of Scotland,” £1 17s. 6d.

Dr. Currie, in his memoir of the poet, mentions this Society as being still in existence at the time at which he wrote (1800), and its name appears in the list of subscribers to Currie's edition of Burns's Works. This, minute-book extends only till Nov. 20, 1787. Dr. Currie remarks: “After the family of our bard removed from Tarbolton to the neighbourhood of Mauchline, he and his brother were requested to assist in forming a similar institution there. The regulations of the club at Mauchline were nearly the same as those of the club at Tarbolton, but one laudable

alteration was made. The fines for non-attendance had at Tarbolton been spent in enlarging their scanty potations. At Mauchline it was fixed that the money so arising should be set apart for the purchase of books, and the first work procured in this manner was the *Mirror*, the separate numbers of which were at that time recently collected and published in volumes. After it, followed a number of other works, chiefly of the same nature, and among these the *Lounger*." It is added: "Though the records of the Society at Tarbolton are lost, and those of the Society at Mauchline have not been transmitted, yet we may safely affirm that our poet was a distinguished member of both these Associations, which were well calculated to excite and to develop the powers of his mind." It will be seen that Dr. Currie's hypothesis is incorrect, as the poet (no doubt from the circumstances above alluded to) does not seem to have attended any of the meetings of the Society. The following is the constitution of the club:—

RULES OF THE CLUB.

"In order to promote friendship and society, the under subscribers, having for some time formed a club, for the sake of regularity do agree to commit the regulations to writing, which are as follows:—

"That they shall meet once a month in the house of Charles Paton, or any other public-house in Mauchline they shall think convenient, for the purpose of conversing on a given thesis or question which may be on an innocent subject. The manner of proceeding shall be thus: If it be a question between two opposite opinions, the president shall ask each member which side of the argument he means to take, after which they shall deliver their opinions one on each side alternately till they have all spoke, the president giving his opinion the last. They shall then fix on some thesis or question for next meeting. The president or any other member may propose one, and that which shall have the approbation of the majority shall stand for the subject of conversation next meeting. They shall next choose a president for next meeting in the same manner, who shall have two votes at any of the club's proceedings in case of a par; and after having appointed the day and hour

of next meeting, conclude with writing down the proceedings of the meeting in their book of records, which shall be given to the new elected president, no person having liberty to depart before the business is over without leave from the president.

"Every member not attending or sending his excuse in writing shall pay a fine of three pence into the hands of one of the members of the club appointed for the purpose, and every member coming or sending excuse after the hour appointed, to pay in like manner three-half-pence, these fines to be kept and applied to the purchase of such books as the club shall think fit, to remain the property of the club while it remains, which shall be while any three of its members are willing to continue. Any member being absent three meetings shall be wrote by the president whether he means to leave the club.

"Every member who shall betray the secrets, condemn the laws, or otherwise by his conduct become disagreeable to the club, shall be excluded from all its privileges or any right in its property.

"Any member intending to impeach another, introduce any new regulation or new member, or settle any extraordinary affair of the club, shall intimate his intention a meeting previous to such motions being made, when the decision of a majority of the then present members shall stand in all cases except the admission of a new member, who must have the unanimous suffrage of all the members of the club, and every new member admitted shall pay into the funds of the club a sum equal to the fund of the club, divided by the number of members, and signify his assent to the rules of the club by subscribing his name thereto, as we the original members now do:—

David Siller	William Paton
Gilbert Burns	David Stevenson
John Siller	William Morton
James Wilson	Archd. Woodburn
James Hunter	John Begg
William Lindsay	John Andrew
Ralph Siller	Robert Andrew
John Stevenson	Andrew Morton
John Wilson	William Watson
Robert Paton	Alexr. Miller
Alexander Wilson	William Marr."

The original members were the first ten

whose names appear in the above list, the other names having been added at various times afterwards. Each member has in turn appended his signature to the rules.

In what follows we give the minutes of the first two meetings in full, and extracts from the rest, showing the dates of the meetings, name of the president on each occasion, and the subjects of discussion. These are very curious, in many instances ingenious, and throw an interesting light on the habits of thought and feeling which prevailed in the country districts of Scotland a century ago.

EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES.

1786.

"October 30th, 1786, being the first meeting of the club. After agreeing to write their proceedings, they debated on the following question, viz.: 'Whether between two friends who have entire confidence in each other there ought to be any reserve.' At the hour appointed appeared Ralph Siller (president), Gilbert Burns, John Siller, David Siller, James Hunter; after, John Wilson, William Linjah, John Stevenson, James Wilson; Robert Paton sent excuse; when, after a debate on the question, they fixed on the following question for next meeting, viz.: 'Whether an evil we foresee, which will very probably happen, or really felt, gives us most uneasiness.' The meeting to be November 27th, six evening, William Linjah, president. They also appointed James Hunter, treasurer."

"Nov. 27th.—There appeared at the hour appointed William Linjah, Gilbert Burns, James Hunter, John Wilson, John Siller, David Siller; Ralph Siller and James Wilson sent excuses; and Robert Paton and John Stevenson absent. After discussing the question formerly proposed for that night they made choice of the following question for the ensuing meeting, viz.: 'Whether the man that engages no further in the world than what will afford him a livelihood, or him that runs as far as power and opportunity will admit, is most likely to be happy.' They appointed Tuesday, the 2nd of January, for next meeting, Gilbert Burns, president. John Stevenson's excuse appeared to have been sent timeously, but was omitted to be given in."

1787.

Jan. 2—Gilbert Burns, president—Subject debated in terms of preceding minute, and new subject appointed for next meeting.

Jan. 29—Robert Paton—"Whether it is most proper for a man to go much into company or to associate only with a few particular friends."

Feb. 26—John Stevenson—"Whether the love of fame or the love of wealth, when considered as the motive of our actions, is productive of the worst consequences."

March 26—John Wilson—"Whether smuggling under such a Government as ours may be said to be really a crime or not."

April 23—James Wilson—"Whether it is proper for young people to attend at public meetings when not caused by business, or not."

May 21—James Hunter—"Whether in attending at public places it is proper to enter into the bustle of gallantry or not."

June 16—John Siller—"Whether in the balancing the pleasures and troubles of life, when stript of their connection with a future state, our life may be said to be a state desirable or not." The minute of this date has the following: "The Club have agreed to purchase a copy of the *Mirror* and *Lounger*, which amounts to 17s. They advanced 1s. 7d. each towards such purchase till such time as the funds of the Club shall be able to repay them. Any member leaving the Club before that time shall be allowed such a proportion of the money advanced as the Club shall see equitable."

July 16—John Wilson—"Whether in choosing a wife, men in general are most actuated by virtue or riches."

Aug. 20—Gilbert Burns—"Whether love, in the present state of society, is productive of most happiness or uneasiness."

Sept. 17—James Hunter—"Whether real love is susceptible of change while the object of our desires continues unaltered."

Oct. 29—David Siller—"Whether real love may be said to be an universal passion or not."

Nov. 26—Gilbert Burns—"Whether, if the labouring part of mankind were to conduct themselves on the strictest principles of

economy, or on their present mode of action, it would be better for society in general."

Dec. 24—John Wilson—"Whether a greater enlargement of mind and more universal knowledge would have a good effect on society, or otherwise"

1788.

Jan. 21—Ralph Siller—"Whether, if mankind were more nearly on a level, it would be better for society in general, or in the present state." Under this date it is minuted: "The members present agreed that at next meeting they will settle upon such books as the money in the treasurer's hands will purchase."

Feb. 18—John Stevenson—"Whether he who sets off human life in an agreeable point of view, or he who gives a gloomy representation of it, does most service to mankind."

March 17—James Wilson—"Whether disappointment in love or the loss of fortune is the greatest evil."

April 14—James Hunter—"Whether, if a man is inclined to marry and has no particular person in view, it is proper to go to any public meeting to look out for a wife, or not." Gilbert Burns sends excuse, being absent for the first time.

May 12—William Paton—"Whether the man who embraces every opportunity of carrying on trade, or he who confines himself to a single branch of business, does most for society in general." Gilbert Burns is again absent.

June 9—Alex. Wilson—"Whether a friendship contracted between two young men may be impaired by a following attachment to a woman."

July 7—Gilbert Burns—"Whether a girl will be more happy to have her mind cultivated in the best manner or to receive the education common to her station in life."

Aug. 5—Members met but business adjourned.

Sept. 2—David Siller—"Whether a man ought to defer marriage until he find a woman capable to be his bosom friend or not."

Oct. 3—John Wilson—"Whether the want of knowledge or the want of activity is the greatest hindrance to a man's progress in the world."

Nov. 10—William Lindsay—By unanimous

agreement of the members, the subject of last meeting is debated again.

Dec. 9—Ralph Siller—"Whether, if it is not convenient for a man to marry, it is proper he should pay any attention to the female sex or not."

1789.

Jan. 5—David Stevenson—"Whether if a man be resolved not to marry for some time, he should confine himself to one female or not."

Feb. 2—Gilbert Burns absent, and so few present that debate is postponed.

March 2—James Wilson—"Whether a man in the lower stations of life will be happier with a wife of reading and of a refined turn of mind, or one of just ordinary accomplishments." The members "agree that whosoever does not bring in their books regularly every meeting shall pay one penny of fine."

April 6—James Hunter—"Whether a parent in the lower stations acts more prudently to give his children all the education he can, or only what is ordinary." Gilbert Burns absent.

May 4—John Stevenson—"Whether a man will be better with a good deal more education than what is necessary for the business he follows, or not."

June 1—David Siller—"Whether it would be better for the generality of men to marry in early life when love first suggests to them that idea, or to defer it till maturer age when circumstances in the world may be more favourable."

June 29—Gilbert Burns—"Whether there is not a certain time of life that a man should marry, or after that time he should give up all thoughts of marrying or not."

July 27—John Siller—"Whether the young man acts most prudently who places his whole attention on gathering money, or he who in early life pays no attention to money than serves his present necessity, but aims principally at improving his knowledge of the world and enjoying social life."

Aug. 24—Subject of last meeting again debated.

Oct. 18—William Paton—"Whether the man of a free, open temper, or the man most

reserved, is likely to make the most of his business."

Nov. 2—David Stevenson—"Whether if a man with a view to marriage means to make his addresses to a woman, he should begin with a declaration of his intentions, or not."

Nov. 30—William Morton—"Whether if after a man has made his addresses to a woman and she has been consenting, his honour is bound to go on with the affair though he should find something in her character that he did not before see or expect." Gilbert Burns absent.

Dec. 20—William Lindsay—"Whether people in the married life are likely to be more happy with or without children."

1790.

Jan. 25—Ralph Siller—"Whether a graceful manner or a cultivated understanding is likely to do a man most good in the world."

Feb. 22—Gilbert Burns—"Whether in a young man's looking out for a wife he ought to have more regard to her fortune or her personal charms."

March 22—William Paton—"Whether town or country life is most calculated to improve the human mind."

April 19—John Siller—"Whether the drunken husband or the scolding wife is most hurtful to domestic happiness."

May 17—So few present that debate is adjourned."

June 14—James Wilson—"Whether a good mind will receive more pleasure from giving or receiving a favour."

July 12—Gilbert Burns, who had been appointed president for this meeting, sends excuse for absence. Subject discussed: "Whether there be less virtue in the world now than appears to have been a century or two ago."

Aug. 16—James Hunter—"Whether undeserved blame or praise will give most uneasiness, when one understands it flows from a bad intention." Gilbert Burns absent.

Sept. 13—James Wilson—"Whether poverty or riches tends most to lead the mind from the path of virtue."

Oct. 18—David Stevenson—"Whether the miser or the prodigal is the most hurtful character."

Nov. 15—Ralph Siller—"Whether the

world is more indebted for improvement to men of learning or the fair sex."

Dec. 13—William Morton—"Whether a man of a frank, open turn of mind, or one who is most reserved, will be happier within himself."

1791.

Jan. 17—Debate postponed.

Feb. 14—William Lindsay—"Whether marriages are most happy after long or short courtships."

March 14—David Siller—"Which is most an object of desire, an enlightened understanding or a feeling heart." Gilbert Burns absent.

April 11—John Siller—"Whether the ties of blood, love, or friendship are strongest."

May 9—James Wilson—"Whether great genius is more advantageous or disadvantageous to the possessor."

June 12—Gilbert Burns—"Whether town or country life is most favourable for the improvement of youth." The members agree to purchase the *Spectator* and "The Man of Feeling."

July 4—David Siller—"Whether love, in the present state of society, is generally more productive of pain or pleasure." Gilbert Burns absent.

Aug. 1—John Begg—"Whether success or disappointment in love is most likely to confirm the mind in virtue."

Aug. 29—John Andrew—"Whether or not it is in a man's power to make choice of the object of his love so as he may not be disappointed when he comes to possession." Gilbert Burns absent from this and four following meetings.

Sept 19—Ralph Siller—"Whether a man in the decline of life and in very mean circumstances will be more happy in living by himself or with a wife and family."

Oct. 31—John Siller—"Whether the sword or the pen has rendered men most famous in the world."

Nov. 28—Debate postponed.

Dec. 26—James Hunter—"Whether to one who knows about friendship, the decay of it, or to be without friendship altogether, will be most disagreeable."

1792.

Jan. 30—James Wilson—"Whether self-

conceit or meanness of spirit is the most despicable character."

Feb. 27—William Lindsay—"Whether there is greater vanity in imposing upon ourselves or on others with regard to the merit of our own character."

March 26—John Andrew—"Whether an evil in expectation that will probably happen or an evil in experience will give most uneasiness." Gilbert Burns absent from this and three following meetings.

April 23—John Begg—"Whether he who lives contentedly in the situation he happens to be in, or he who endeavours to improve it as much as he can, is most likely to be happy."

May 21—David Stevenson—"Whether an active or more indolent mind will feel most from disappointment."

June 18—Robert Andrew—"Whether the male or female sex is supposed to be most steady in their affection." Minute of this meeting bears: "It is agreed to make a motion at next meeting for all the books to be collected and shown, and in the case of failure, to pay such fine as the meeting shall think proper."

July 16—William Morton—"Whether the alteration of mind in man or woman is most excusable."

Aug. 13—John Begg—"Whether marriages made in early life while the affections are warm, or those made at a maturer time of life, are likeliest to be happy." Gilbert Burns absent from this and two following meetings.

Sept. 10—John Siller—"Whether the happiness of marriages in general is more owing to love or prudence."

Nov. 9—James Hunter—"Whether there is greater impropriety in confiding in our neighbours too rashly or in indulging too much caution."

Nov. 26—David Siller—"Whether trouble of mind or trouble of body is most prejudicial to the constitution."

Dec. 24—Arch. Woodburn—"Whether a Republican form of Government or a mixed Monarchy is best."

1793.

Jan. 21—Gilbert Burns—"Whether it is probable, if a Republican form of Government were to take place, it would tend to more happiness for the present generation."

Feb. 18—William Paton—"Whether training a young man to Agriculture or to Manufacture will tend more to his health and happiness."

March 18—David Siller—"Whether the present war with France may be supposed to turn out for or against the cause of liberty."

April 15—Arch. Woodburn—"Whether farming is likely to become a better or a worse business from the present appearance of circumstances."

May 13—James Wilson—"Whether farmers fifty years ago may be said to have been happier than they are at present." Gilbert Burns absent.

June 10—John Begg—"Whether friendship is oftenest hurt by pride or indifference."

July 8—William Lindsay—"Whether pride or indifference does most hurt to the person possessed."

Aug. 19—James Hunter—"From the present disagreeable appearance of things, whether may be most preferable a married or a single life." Gilbert Burns absent from this and four following meetings. The members "agreed that at next meeting they should bring their books to the Club and have some regulations made about them."

Sept. 16—David Stevenson—"Whether the female sex in general are most hurt by being too reserved or too forward." Agreed that "any members in future being absent and having any of the Society's books in possession and not sending them shall pay 1d of fine for each."

Oct. 28—William Paton—"Whether it is generally an advantage for young men to get very early into business."

Nov. 18—John Siller—"Whether with people in general the knowledge of themselves or of their neighbours is the more difficult attainment."

Dec. 16—James Hunter—"Whether liberty or reputation is most dear to the mind of man."

1794.

Jany. 13—Attendance so small that debate is postponed.

Feb. 10—John Begg—"Whether a man in love who has but little hope of success would rather live on that little than get a fair denial."

March 10—William Paton—"Whether on the present critical condition of affairs in the nation it is proper for people publicly to give their opinion."

April 7—Debate adjourned.

May 5—Robert Andrew—"Whether in the case of those who think the Government of this country corrupted it is more proper to stay in it and endeavour to have it remedied, or leave it for a country where a better Government exists." Gilbert Burns absent from this and two following meetings.

June 2.—William Watson—"Whether a pure Government is more necessary for a knowing or an ignorant people."

July 2.—Debate postponed.

July 28.—David Stevenson—"Whether men's actions in general are more influenced by interest or reputation."

Aug. 25—James Hunter—"Whether love or hatred may lead to the greatest extremities."

Oct. 6.—Debate postponed.

Nov. 3.—Andrew Morton—"Whether the warm and enthusiastic in love or they who are more cold and moderate are likely to be most steady in it." Gilbert Burns absent.

Dec. 1.—William Lindsay—"Whether unbounded confidence or real esteem is the more valuable ingredient in friendship."

Dec. 29.—John Siller—"Whether prosperity or adversity is most likely to cause keenness of pursuit after their business in the minds of men in general." Gilbert Burns absent from this and the two following meetings.

1795.

Jan. 26.—David Siller—Members "thinking they had not done justice to the former question" discuss it again.

Feb. 23.—Robert Andrew—"Whether extraordinary or ordinary keenness in business is generally attended with greatest success."

March 23.—William Lindsay—"Whether difference of opinion among mankind is more generally occasioned by the natural frame of their minds or by their education."

April 20.—Ralph Siller—"Whether in a young woman a comely face or a handsome form is most to be admired."

May 18—For this meeting Gilbert Burns had been appointed president. The minute bears: "So few members attended that they thought it proper to defer the discussion of

the question till the 14th June, when the president having forgot to attend they could do no other business than to appoint next meeting to be on 13th July."

July 13—Gilbert Burns—"Whether in educating a young man for the world it is better to repress or encourage the natural warmth of his feelings."

Aug. 10—Robert Andrew—"Whether it is proper for young people to read many novels or not." It is here noted: "There appeared all the members happening to be in the place except James Hunter." The name of Gilbert Burns does not appear in the minutes after July 13, though he may have been present at some of the meetings of which the full sederunt is not given.

Sept. 7—William Morton—"Whether prosperity or adversity be most dangerous to the interests of virtue among people in general."

Oct. 20—Alex. Miller—"Whether the virtuous part of mankind or those of an opposite character have generally the advantage of being prosperous in life."

Nov. 23—William Watson—"Whether to receive or communicate knowledge may be said to carry most pleasure to the mind."

Dec. 21—Andrew Morton—"Whether an eager desire after knowledge or after friendship is most laudable in young people."

1796.

Jan. 18—William Watson—"Whether it is reasonable for parents to confine their daughters from the company of young men till they be of proper age to marry, or not."

Feb. 15—William Lindsay—"Whether entire confidence in revealing or faithfulness in keeping secrets is the most valuable quality in friendship."

March 17—John Siller—"Whether it is more consistent with real love to respect or disrespect our rivals."

April 11—Andrew Morton—"Whether a woman may be said to make a man more happy in the married life who soon gives consent, or she who puts off the business for a long time."

May 9—William Lindsay—"Whether when a man is much in love, with little hopes of success, it is better to persevere in his addresses or obey his doubts and fears."

June 6—David Sillar—"Whether when a

man is courting a woman it is better to pay his visits in a public or a private manner."

July 4—James Hunter—"Whether women of a very anxious or of a very easy turn of mind may be said to be most agreeable companions to men in general."

Aug. 2—William Morton—"Whether young people at first outset, or when more advanced in years, may be said to be most constant in love."

Aug. 29—William Marr—"Whether there is generally more happiness in the prospect or in the enjoyment."

Sep. 29—William Wilson—"Whether very great or moderate fondness in love before marriage may be said to be followed with greatest happiness."

Oct. 31—Alex. Miller—"Whether the disposition of candour is oftener the effect of good sense or of other good dispositions of the human heart."

Nov. 14—Andrew Morton—"Whether a man may be said to be more fortunate when living very near his mistress or at a considerable distance from her."

Dec. 22—Robert Andrew—"Whether it is an advantage or a disadvantage for young women in general to be greatly gallanted."

1797.

Jan. 9—James Hunter—"Whether a person inured to all the different turns of gallantry or one simple acquaint in the business may be most acceptable to the female sex."

Feb. 6.—Wm. Marr—"Whether gallantry to people in general may be said to give pleasure on reflection."

March 6—William Watson—"Whether it may be said to be proper to tell a friend all that we hear."

April 3—Debate postponed.

April 28—Andrew Morton—"Whether the thinking or the unthinking part of mankind are most apt to be unreasonably in love."

May 27—Debate postponed.

June 25—John Siller—"Whether a young man may be said to have more influence in courting a girl when much in love or when he is not any in love with her."

July 23—William Morton—"Whether young women in general are fonder of being admired for their personal charms or their mental qualifications."

Aug. 28—William Watson—"Whether the learned or the illiterate part of mankind may be said to be most positive in their opinions."

Sept. 18—Robert Andrew—"Whether a man in his first love, or when in an after passion, is most likely to be successful."

Oct. 23—Debate adjourned.

Nov. 20—John Siller—"Whether a first or a second attachment to one of the other sex deserves most the name of love."

The minute of Nov. 20, which is the last in the book, fixes as the subject of debate for the following meeting: "Whether people are generally more constant in their first love or in an after attachment."

XL.—JOSEPH HOWE ON BURNS.

THIS celebrated Canadian Publicist,—for many years the most influential and admired political personage in Nova Scotia—had not only a warm welcome for Burns, but many characteristics in common with him. He had the same ardent love of popular freedom, and hatred of oppression; the same love of men and women; some of the same lyric passion—for he was himself a poet—and, alas! the same social propensities, sometimes too fondly and carelessly indulged; but, above all, a like charm of personal attractive-

ness, a magnetic presence and speech, which drew and held the hearts of a multitude of people, wherever he appeared for over forty years. At the opening of an Oration delivered before the St. George's Society, Halifax, on an anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, [April 23, 1864] he made the following incidental observations on Burns:

"How many Emperors, Kings, Conquerors, Tyrants, have lived and died these two thousand years, for whom no festivals are kept,—whose example no man quotes,

whose wisdom no man ponders. Their mailed figures, as they appear in history, seem to shake the earth, their pride to flout the skies, their policy to cover the globe. Yet there they lie, the best of them with their marble or bronze hands folded on their stone sarcophagi, looking up to the Heaven they outraged, and challenging from the earth which they devastated but scanty notice or recognition. From all which we gather, shutting divinity out of the question, that the world knows and will ever know its benefactors from its oppressors—that the beauty of holiness outlasts mere earthly splendour—that the still small voice of wisdom will go echoing through the hearts of successive generations, whom the hoarse command of authority cannot stir.

“A little more than a century ago, a child was born in the cottage of a poor Scotch peasant in Ayrshire; and but a few years have passed since the Centennial Anniversary of that boy’s birth was kept throughout the civilised world. You kept it here. I was not present, but I read the account of your celebration with interest and pride. Throughout the British Empire,—all over this continent, wherever the British races mingle and British literature is read—bonfires blazed and cities were illuminated, balls were given, and dinners and suppers were enlivened by the songs of Burns, or by sentiments uttered in his praise. I happened to be in Boston—the city that, next to Halifax and London, for many reasons, I like the best, and where I feel most at home. Two festivals were held,—one at the Revere House, by the North British Society, the other at the Parker House, by the leading literati of New England. I was honoured by invitations to both, and at both witnessed the enthusiasm of the hour, and the intellectual affluence of the community. The Governor of the State, the Mayor of the City, the leading merchants and bankers, the Professors of Cambridge, Whittier and Emerson, Holmes and Hilliard, Fields and Whipple, and a score more of men who give animation to the social, and fire to the public life of the old Bay State, were there; and we all lifted our voices to honour the memory of that poor Scotch peasant, and bowed our heads in reverential

thankfulness above his literary remains. What we were doing in Boston, you were doing here, and the intellectual and appreciative all over the world were doing in the same spirit on the same occasion.

“Now, how did it happen that the noble and the high-born, the scholar, the novelist, the historian, the statesman, the poet, all mingling with the joyous acclamations of those wider classes that come more nearly down to his own worldly station, gave point and significance to festivals got up to honour the memory of a poor ploughman a century after he had passed away? The man was no saint,—sharp of speech and loose of life, at times he tried the patience of many friends, and made many enemies. He lived and died in poverty; his errors, whatever they were, being veiled by no drapery of convention, nor refined away by the ordinary accessories of elegant self-indulgence. He left behind him no relatives who could defend his memory, no sect to battle for his opinions, no wealth to purchase venal advocacy, no station or organised influence to disarm independent criticism. How was it, then, that all the world, by a simultaneous impulse, moved as one man to do honour, on the same day, to the memory of this poor Scotch Ploughman?

“It was because, long after he was dead, and his faults and follies were forgotten, it was discovered (as it had been before by a few keen-sighted and appreciative friends who knew and loved him) that in this man’s soul there had been *genuine inspiration*,—that he was a patriot, an artist,—that by his genius and independent spirit he had given dignity to the pursuits by which the mass of mankind live, and quickened our love of nature by exquisite delineation. It was found that hypocrisy stood rebuked in the presence of his broad humour; that he had put one lyric invocation into the mouth of a dead warrior that would be worth to his country, in any emergency, an army of ten thousand men; that he had painted one picture of his country’s rural life, so touching and so true, that it challenged for her the respect of millions who knew her not, and gave character and refinement to the thoughts of those who knew her best.

“What has become of the wrangling race

of bloody chieftains, whose mutual perfidy and slaughter Tytler so well describes? With the exception of Wallace and Bruce, we would not give the Ayrshire Ploughman for a legion of them. What has become of the drowsy Holy Willies, whose interminable homilies made the Sabbath wearisome in Burns's time, and the gospel past finding out.

They are dozing in the churchyards, as their congregation dozed in the churches; and no one asks to have them waked up by a festival. Yet the man they denounced, and would have burnt if they could, shows his "Cottar's Saturday Night" to the admiring world, and puts them all to shame."

XLI.—THE MEMORY OF BURNS.

BY MR. CHARLES WILLIS.

From an Address, delivered before the St. Leonard's Burns Club, January 25th, 1892.

To discuss the character and the works of Burns is one of the most attractive subjects to a Scotsman, but it is a subject too many-sided to find justice within the compass of a brief address. From the period of his death to the present time, men of the highest rank in literature have devoted their talents to the theme, and I doubt not that, as years roll on, it will find equal favour with the ablest of our posterity. It is impossible for me, therefore, at this time to do more than sketch in outline one or two of the features of the subject that prominently present themselves. Like all other men, Burns had his blemishes of character as well as his virtues; and while it is foolish for his friends to try to ignore these failings, it is equally malicious on the part of his detractors to linger upon them for the purpose of still more deeply darkening them. Censure should be tempered with the remembrance of the fact that, as Beattie the poet says, "Perfection was not made for man below." Besides, an adequate judgment of the character of such a man as Burns can never be found if we omit to consider how highly strung was his temperament, how uncongenial were the most of his surroundings, and how bitterly misfortune pursued him. To paraphrase his own words, we know the errors into which he fell, but we know not what power of resistance he summoned up to avoid even greater errors into which opportunity might have enticed him. For my own part, I prefer to contemplate the light rather than the shade of his character. I think it is not to the faults of great men we should look for guidance in life, though these may

point out to us some things we ought to shun. It is rather to their good qualities that we should look, for these will not only guide us more surely, but give us more pleasure in our contemplation of them as we proceed on our journey. Now, one of the best qualities in Burns was his independent spirit. By this I mean the honest pride that would not let him stoop to meanness even for self-interest. He who could by his own conduct, and in unforgettable language, teach manliness to his countrymen, is not a figure that cavillers can easily overthrow. To cast withering scorn on what is base and sordid, to teach love of right and disdain of wrong, to bid men cultivate the manhood that was in them, to exhort the world to join hands in lasting goodwill—this was a work worthy of a great workman, and nobly accomplished by Burns. There have been great poets, such as Pope, who looked at outward nature with but dimmed sight. Their lines are, indeed, an intellectual feast, but they receive only an intellectual assent from the reader. They never stir the feelings, never draw a tear to the eye, never make a thrill of love shoot through the heart. Far otherwise is it with Burns. To him the inanimate objects of nature seemed like living existences, and so copiously and fervently did his feelings flow into his words, that those who read his verses cannot but feel with him. To us, as to him, the daisy becomes a sentient being, and we mourn its untimely fate as we should mourn the fate of some loved one suddenly reft from our sight. To us, as to him, the brook assumes the sportiveness of a child.

How exquisitely fine are these lines in
"Hallowe'en."—

"Whyles ower a linn the burnie plays,
As through a glen it wimpl't ;
Whyles round a rocky scaur it strays,
Whyles in a wiel it dimpl't ;
Whyles glittered to the nightly rays,
Wi' bickering, dancing dazzle ;
Whyles cookit underneath the braes,
Below the spreading hazel."

Could any mother, inspired with the language of poetry, have described more tenderly the playfulness of her babe? But much as we must admire and love Burns for his sympathy with the lower objects of nature, and for the skill with which he vitalises them, and evokes from us a sympathy in unison with his own, he has still a higher claim on our admiration and affection. For who like him has sung of the grand passion that sways the world? Where in all the realm of poesy are there love songs like those of Burns? Nowhere

has the fervour of love been so passionately expressed; nowhere has its tenderness been breathed with so touching a pathos. In concluding, I cannot do better than quote the closing verses of a poem by Longfellow on his brother poet:—

"And then to die so young, and leave
Unfinished what he might achieve ;
Yet better sure
Is this, than wandering up and down
An old man in a country town,
Infirm and poor.
For now he haunts his native land
As an immortal youth ; his hand
Guides every plough ;
He sits beside each ingle-nook,
His voice is in each rushing brook,
Each rustling bough.
His presence fills this room to-night,
A form of mingled mist and light,
From that far coast.
Welcome beneath this roof of mine,
Welcome !—this vacant chair is thine,
Dear guest and ghost."

XLII.—BURNS.

BY D. M. HENDERSON.

A THOUSAND leagues of sea,
A century of time,
Are naught to Fancy strong and free,
Naught to the living rhyme !

A soul once breathed in song
Endures a second birth—
Burns once to Scotland did belong
But now to all the earth !

He sang by flowing Ayr
Love's artless, raptured lay,
And kindred fond hearts everywhere
Repeat the strains to-day !

Here, lilt the blithe goodwife—
There, happy mother croon
The cheery songs of humble life
He sang by Bonnie Doon !

His words make cowards brave ;
Hope to the bruised returns ;

The tyrant trembles lest his slave
Should hear the song of Burns !

Manhood is regal now—
The bard restored its crown ;
True worth dares lift its open brow
Nor bows to titles down !

Oh, why should bigots blame,
Where pity prompts to weep ?
Why fools and base men laud his shame ?
Peace, let his body sleep !

Bury in fair Dumfries
The fleshly stain and strife—
But give the spirit grand release
To ampler, nobler life !

His manly scorn of wrong,
His love of manly worth,
The burden of his manly song
Shall girdle yet the earth !

XLIII.—RICHARD HENRY STODDARD ON BURNS.

THAT Burns would be to-day the poet that —not so much because he was the poet of
he was a hundred years ago, I do not believe his period, which he certainly was not, in a

large sense, as because he was the poet of his day and neighbourhood. No such poet as Burns is possible in the last half of the nineteenth century, not even in his stern and rugged land, which happily is not what it once was when he was born. His genius was not imperial, like Shakespeare's, nor patrician, like Byron's, but plebeian, of the people from whom he sprang, and for the people to whom he sang. He sang because they sang; no people ever had such songs as theirs: and his songs, for what they are, are what the play of Shakespeare are. That his

countrymen admired him is not to be wondered at, his note is so true and his range is so large; nor that they should have worshipped his memory since his death. What is to be wondered at is the alacrity with which they welcomed his successors, the best of whom was not worthy to undo the latchet of his shoe. He was learned beside them, they were so ignorant, and abstemious when compared with most, they were so bibulous. They were a curious lot; but one of the most curious, James Hogg, was not without the rudiments of genius.

XLIV.—BURNS AT BROW.

BY ELLEN CORBETT SNELL.

OH, dinna steek the sunlight oot,
 Though I am sick an' like to dee;
 The bonnie things o' brighter days
 Are a' the bonnier noo for me.
 The mavis never sang so sweet,
 Nor flowered sae fair the hawthorn tree:
 Oh, let the bonnie sun shine on,
 For sune he'll shine nae mair for me!
 My blessing on the kindly hand
 That fain would ease the poet's pain;
 But couthie care and kindly words—
 They canna gie me health again.

Wi' storm behind an' nicht before,
 A waefu' weird is mine to dree;
 O let the bonnie sun shine on,
 For sune he'll shine nae mair for me!
 O wae's me for the wee bit day,
 Sae lately dawned, sae sune to set!
 O wae's me for the roughsome road
 My weary feet are treading yet!
 It rins beside a rushing tide
 That's no' the Solway's silver sea;
 An' I maun cross to eerie shores
 That hae nae leme o' licht for me!

XLV.—SONNET—BY THE DEATH-BED OF BURNS.

BY JAMES COGHILL.

STRONG son of sweetest song, sublime of
 soul,
 Thy destined hour of death draws swiftly
 nigh:
 Thou soon must render back to the Most
 High
 That gift of His which lights thee to the goal
 Towards which o'er passion's wild tempestu-
 tuous roll,
 Thou, ever fearless, thy bold bark didst
 guide,
 Till now she in the haven safe doth ride,

And thou of thy wild course review'st the
 whole.
 No word of vain regret escapes thee now:
 As thou thro' life wast fearless, lo, thine
 eye
 Still flasheth bright, aflame with courage
 high,
 Even while the gloom of death steals o'er thy
 brow.
 Oh, death, for heroic souls thou hast no
 sting!
 Oh, Grave, 'tis but the clay to thee we
 bring!

XLVI.—A BURNS BOUQUET.

(Culled from the Tributes paid at the Great Centenary Occasion of 25th January, 1859.)

LORD ARDMILLAN.

"As the embodiment of popular genius, the champion of popular independence, and the type of popular elevation, his (Burns's) memory—not the memory of his faults and follies, but the memory of his matchless genius and his noble spirit—is cherished close to the heart of every Scottish man.

"It is not alone to his humble birth, his rural toils, and his Scottish dialect, that the name of Burns owes its popular spell. The true power of the charm lies in *three* qualities characteristic alike of the man and of his poetry—sensibility, simplicity, and reality. He was the poet not of fiction, but of truth."

SIR ARCHIBALD ALISON.

"Great as his graphic powers were, they were the least of his varied gifts. It was the depth of his feeling, his warm, expansive love for all mankind, the touching pathos which shone forth in his pieces, which everywhere went to the heart. . . . Above all, he possessed in the highest degree that great quality without which, in the trial of Time, all others are but as tinkling brass—a due appreciation of the dignity of human nature, and a firm determination to assert it. To him we owe those noble lines, now become as household words in every land of freedom—

'The rank is but the guinea stamp
The man's the gowd for a' that.'"

SHERIFF GLASSFORD BELL.

"Great as the benefactor of his species is who extends the confines of science, not less great is he whose finer eye looks with a clearer perception into all the subtle mechanism of the human heart. Robert Burns invented no steam-engine, but he knew the secret source of tears and smiles; he discovered no new planet, but he called up thoughts that twinkled in the soul like stars; he made us no richer in worldly wealth, but he taught us how divine a thing human love may be—he taught us the nobility of earnest patriotism and unflinching manliness."

MR. MONCKTON MILNES (LORD HOUGHTON).

"With his poetry, the incidents of his common and private life have become the events of a century; the songs composed for the merriment of an obscure tavern club have set millions of tables ringing with delight; the natural outpourings of his affections have become the stimulus and the interpreter of youthful passion in ten thousand breasts; and the religious bickerings of a remote province have been made vocal with the most stirring trumpet tones of civil and religious liberty."

DR. NORMAN MACLEOD.

"There are two things which to me make Burns sufficiently memorable. One is his noble protest for the independence and dignity of humanity; another is his intense nationality—a noble sentiment, springing like a plant deeply rooted for ages in the soil, and bearing fruit which nourishes the manliest virtues of a people. Few men have done for any country in this respect what Burns has done for Scotland."

DR. JAMES HEDDERWICK.

"Taking him for all in all—taking the influence of his life, and the moral of his death—I believe that Scotland is infinitely the better for Burns having lived. His ambition was to do something for his country, and, if he could do no better, 'to mak' a sang at least.' The effect of what he actually achieved has been to make love sweeter, integrity bolder, hypocrisy more abashed."

HUGH MACDONALD.

"Burns dared to show us his heart; and, despite a few specks or flaws, an open, manly, and loving heart it was. He is the most loving of all poets, and, therefore, the most lovable. Love and sympathy pervade his writings in a larger measure than those of any other poet that I know—and hence, in my opinion, one main cause of his extreme popularity. To others we yield respect and

admiration—to him our kindest affections are surrendered.”

REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

“Scotland loves Burns in spite of his errors ; and in so doing she cannot help herself. She must honour him, because, first of all, he was her greatest natural genius and potential man ; because, secondly, he possessed many high and noble qualities, being an honest man—a true man—a man of rugged independence—a man of warm heart—and because, especially, he loved the people, protested against their wrongs, sang their sorrows and

joys, fanned the glow of their well-placed love, sympathised with their toils, and strove for their elevation.”

JAMES HANNAY.

“He would speak of Burns not only as a poet, but as one of the greatest men that the race of which they were all proud had produced. He would not simply look upon him as a man of letters, but as a great Scotsman—a product of the nation to which he belonged, and as part of it—a man whose writings and life became as much a part of Scottish nationality as the Castle of Edinburgh or the Palace of Holyrood.”

XLVII.—CROWNED WITH IMMORTELLS OF LOVE AND HONOUR.

From an address delivered by GEORGE SAVAGE, Esq., Jan. 25, 1888, before the Caledonia Club of Baltimore, Maryland.

ANY account of Burns, however brief and unpretentious, which does not include at least a reference to the circumstances of his birth and the influences which surrounded his infancy and early life, would be sadly incomplete. He was a child of poverty, toil and suffering. The fierce wind which unroofed the humble cottage in Ayrshire, which on the night of January 25, 1759, sheltered the infant around whose cradle the Muses gathered in love and reverence, seemed to presage the years of bitter trials, sore disappointments and stormy passions which awaited him. His mother was forced to seek shelter for herself and her first-born of a few days in a neighbour's house, and thus almost from the hour of his birth was Burns made acquainted with dependence and charity. The world did not appear to welcome him. But if nature smiled not upon his birth, the blessed genii who had predestined him to become immortal were liberal and happy in their selection of the parents who were to cheer, protect and guide him, as far as they could, on his weary way to Parnassus.

The impress left upon the mind and heart of Burns by his parents was a strong and indelible one, and all who honour his memory and delight in his works should give thanks to them for having so moulded,

inspired and directed him, that he was enabled to utilize his rare natural endowments, and to achieve immortality. When we remember his humble parentage and his poverty, and think of his great and ever increasing fame, well may we exclaim with Ruskin: “It is far better to be nobly remembered than to be nobly born.”

The secret of the lasting fame and the great honours which have been, and must continue to be the debt which posterity pays to Burns, is that he felt deeply and nobly, and wrote because his heart prompted him and just as he felt. He tells us that he never feared an enemy or failed a friend, and adds, “I have written my heart in my poems, and rude, unfinished and hasty as they are, it can be read there. From seven years of age to this very hour I have been dependent only on my own head and hands for everything—for very bread. But I thank God that though I have felt sad suffering, the scathing blast has neither blunted my perceptions of natural and moral beauty, nor, by withering the affections of my heart, made me a selfish man.” And how millions of the English-speaking race pore over these poems of a poor, suffering, erring Scottish ploughman, because they can read his heart there ! His countrymen have erected imposing monuments to him on the soil that gave him birth

and which he loved so well, and during the eighty years which have elapsed since he died at the early age of thirty-seven two biographies of him have been published every decade, so great is the desire to know his whole story. Lately six volumes of his letters have been published. He was wretched in his life and miserable in his death, but in his fame he is immortal! He was not understood or appreciated even by those who *knew* him as he walked upon his native land and glorified her banks and braes,

but the measure of his fame is full at last. Well may we apply to him the words of Shelley: "No living poet ever arrives at the fulness of his fame; the jury which sits in judgment upon a poet, belonging as it does to all time, must be composed by Time, from the selectest of the wise of many generations." Such a jury of more than two generations has already crowned Burns with immortelles of love and honour, and enthroned him among the immortals.

XLVIII.—BURNS AND WHITTIER.

BY WM. LAMBIE, YPSILANTI, MICH.

WE look upon Burns as being the best farmer poet for Scotland, and Whittier as the best farmer poet in America. It may be well said regarding them both—

"But who his human heart has laid
To nature's bosom nearer,
Who sweetened toil like him, or paid
To love a tribute dearer?"

A few years ago when the Burns Club of Boston invited Whittier to celebrate the anniversary of Burns along with them, he could not be present but sent the following letter:—

"I scarcely need thy kind invitation to remind me of the anniversary of Burns. It is a red-letter day in our calenders. There is not a logging camp in the Maine woods, nor a miner's hut in the Sierras, that will forget it. For one day at least we will all be Scotchmen. The great poet has made all the world his debtor."

It has been said that Carlyle, being a Scotchman, could enter better into the inner life of Burns, and that his essay on Burns was the best that was ever written; but we think that an American poet, the pure John G. Whittier, paid higher honours and kinder compliments to Robert Burns than Carlyle, or any other man we ever heard of. It seems strange that ministers and good writers have so much to say regarding Burns's faults, and so little about the bright side of his life. Hear what Whittier has to say:—

"To-day be every fault forgiven
Of him in whom we joy!"

We take with thanks the gold of Heaven
And leave the earth's alloy.

"Be ours his music as of spring
His sweetness as of flowers—
The songs the bard himself might sing
In holier ears than ours."

Well done, righteous, reliable Whittier. He says nothing about Burns's poverty; far otherwise. "He made all the world his debtor." Will the Rothschilds of Europe, or the Vanderbilts of America, ever be as rich as Burns? Only a small part of the world has ever been indebted to men with millions in the banks. Christian ministers seldom speak kindly regarding Burns; they seem to think that he sneered at religious men. He didn't sneer at upright Christians like his old father. His fine poetical insight saw through the deception of men who were wolves in sheep's clothing. He expressed his admiration for true religion in two grand lines—

"All hail religion, maid divine,
Pardon a muse so mean as mine."

All those who have had so many doubts regarding Burns's religion must gain a new flood of light by reading Whittier's fine compliment to Burns. He says nothing regarding the Scotch pulpit, or Knox and Chalmers, but gives the credit for improving the religion of Scotland to Robert Burns. It was not Beecher or Talmage, nor was it Moody and Sankey, that made Whittier sing—

"With clearer eyes I saw the worth
Of life among the lowly;
The Bible at his father's hearth
Has made my own most holy."

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